

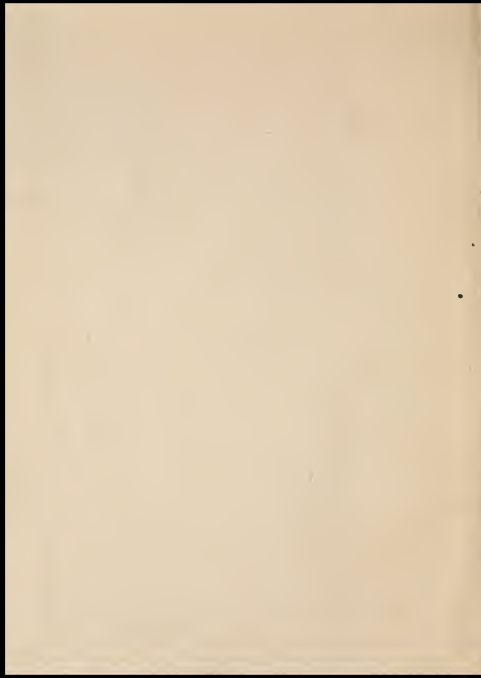
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A  
RANDOM HISTORICAL SKETCH.  
OF  
MEEKER COUNTY, Minnesota.  
FROM ITS FIRST SETTLEMENT,

TO  
JULY 4th, 1876.

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BY A. C. SMITH,  
PRESIDENT OF THE BAR  
AND OLD SETTLER'S ASSOCIATIONS FOR  
SAID COUNTY.

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WITH AN ACCURATE MAP BY  
HENRY L. SMITH.

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LITCHFIELD, MINN.  
BELFOY & JOUBERT,  
PUBLISHERS.  
1877.

# THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



RESPECTFULLY  
DEDICATED  
TO THE  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,  
UNDER WHOSE ADVICE IT WAS PREPARED  
BY THE  
AUTHOR.

July 4th, 1876.



PREFACE.

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WHEREAS, A joint resolution of the Senate and House of Representatives was duly approved on the 13th day of March last, which resolution is as follows :

*Be it Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled :*

That it be, and is hereby recommended by the Senate and House of Representatives to the people of the several States, that they assemble in their several counties or towns, on the approaching Centennial anniversary of our national independence, and that they cause to have delivered on such day an historical sketch of said county or town from its formation, and that a copy of such sketch may be filed, in print or manuscript, in the clerk's office of said county, and an additional copy, in print

## PREFACE.

or manuscript, be filed in the office of the Librarian of Congress, to the intent that a complete record may thus be obtained of the progress of our institutions during the first century of their existence.

And whereas, It is deemed proper that such recommendation be brought to the notice and knowledge of the people of the United States—

Now, therefore, I, Ulysses S. Grant, President of the United States, do hereby declare and make known the same, in the hope that the object of the resolution may meet the approval of the people of the United States, and that proper steps may be taken to carry the same into effect.

Given under my hand at the city of Washington  
this 25th day of May, in the year of our Lord  
1876, and of the Independence of the United  
States, the 100th.

U. S. GRANT.

By the President,  
HAMILTON FISH,  
Secretary of State.

## CHAPTER I.

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The region known as the "Big Prairie" west of the "Big Woods" has been known to white settlers but 21 years, and yet the twilight of uncertainty has already thrown its shadows, and the night of forgetfulness seems about to descend and forever obscure many little incidents which, although in detail seem of little consequence, yet all go to make up a readable history of any community.

The Centennial year of our great Republic seems to open up an opportunity, which the President of the United States recommended to our people to improve and place in permanent shape for preservation, the historical data of the various counties and towns of the Republic.

In a little while the venerable gentlemen who composed our first settlers will all be gathered to their fathers—"their children engrossed by the empty pleasures or insignificant transactions of the present age (or in the greedy pursuit of the almighty dollar,) will neglect to treasure up the recollections of the past and posterity will search in vain for memorials of the days of the Patriarchs" (Knickerbocker's History of New York.) Our history will be but a shadow, and the names of Ripley, Hall, Whitney, DeCoster, Campbell, Fitzgerald, Weymer, Salisbury, Dougherty, Atkinson, VanNess, Mitchell, Dorman, Taylor, Evans, Skinner, Jewett, Kennedy, Stevens, Harvey, Piper, Caswell, Angier, Willis, Dart, Whitcomb, King, Greenleaf, Branham, Fitch, Ball, Hoyt, Griswold, Grayson, Stanton, Robson, Richards, Gorton, Wakefield, Heath, Warren, Willie, Kruger, Ralston, Schultz and a score of others will soon be enveloped in doubt and fiction, like those of "Romulus and Remus of Charlemagne."

Prior to 1855 the country now embraced within the boundaries of Meeker and Kandiyohi counties, in the State of Minnesota, was occupied by those denizens of the forest known as the Sioux Indians. This is their old stamping ground. The Mississippi River was the dividing line between the Sioux and

Chippewas, and for centuries they are said to have nursed a deadly feud. The former heroes of this territory, the Sioux, were and still are, perhaps among the most powerful of the Indian tribes in the northwest. These, like all other tribes are gradually losing their prestige and compelled to leave their reservations granted at some prior period, in apparent good faith. Their fate is inevitable. The only practical law of what we call civilization is, that the inferior in prowess, yield to the superior race. The doctrine is cruel and inhuman, not to say "savage," but unavoidable and imperative. Crowd the Indian to the wall—wait a time for further decimation, then drive them into still narrower limits and so on, till the Indian canoe with its solitary occupant, disappears toward the setting sun, and is finally lost to sight and sense, and the life of one race, whose glory was to hunt and fish, gives place to another more powerful, but with as little regard to moral and intellectual attainment except so far as it is enforced by law falsely denominated the law of civilization. Statistics of the Indian war in Meeker county alone will justify what we say. The course and policy of the United States toward the Indian tribes, has ever resulted in peculation to the operators and death to the Indian, with no more prospect of civil-

ization or christianization to-day, than one hundred years ago. Government might quite as well enforce the practice of the "Oneida Institute" on the American people, as to drive christianity or civilization into the Indian in the manner it has sought to do for more than a century past.

The war-like Sioux—driven to the Rocky Mountains, are compelled to make their last fight (and no insignificant one at that,) for tribal existence.—In just one hundred years after the Declaration of our National Independence, the Government is engaged in the expensive, perplexing and perilous effort to drive the last nail in the coffin of American Pagan existence. It will ultimately succeed but at what cost time alone can determine.

We are beginning to realize the enormous contract we are pledged to fill. The strength, as well as the bravery of the Sioux, has been greatly misrepresented. They can certainly bring into the field 20,000 warriors, and twice as many troops will be required to thoroughly and quickly subdue them. With homes in the wilderness of the mountains and forests, strange to say they are better mounted 'for this country and purpose than the United States' Army backed with 500 millions of annual revenue and 40 millions of people. They are equally well armed and superior shots. Finally,

from the very nature of their individual style of fighting, they are magnificent skirmishers—the best in the world; and necessarily the deployed line must be most frequently used in Indian warfare.

The fall of the chivalric CUSTER and his brave command, will be but a drop in the bucket of the sacrifice of human life and treasure.

To understand the extent of the Indian war the Government has upon its hands, it is necessary to have a correct knowledge of the position and power of the hostile Sioux and their allies. In one of the late reports of the Commissioner of Indian affairs the location of the different agencies is given, with the number and condition of the Indians on each reservation. The entire Indian population of the United States, exclusive of Alaska, is estimated at 295,084. In Dakota, Montana and Wyoming, there are nearly 70,000, divided as follows:

## DAKOTA AGENCIES.

	<i>Men.</i>	<i>Women.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Sisseton Agency (Sioux) : : 682	582	1,264	
Devil's Lake (Sioux) : : : 434	586	1,020	
Grand River (Sioux) : : : —	—	6,269	
Cheyenne River (Sioux) : : : —	—	6,000	
Upper Missouri (Sioux) : : 1,600	1,395	2,995	
Fort Berthold (Gros Ventres, Mandan and Arickarees) : : 901	1,202	2,103	
Yankton (Sioux) : : : : —	—	1,947	
Ponca : : : : : 383	355	738	
Whetstone (Sioux) : : : : 2,350	2,650	5,000	

Flandreau special (Sioux) : : : ——— 100

MONTANA.

Blackfeet Agency (Blackfeet, Bloods and

Piegans) : : : : : : : : 7,500

Milk River Agency (Sioux) : : : : : 10,625

At other agencies and wandering : : : : 14,000

WYOMING.

Red Cloud Agency (Sioux and Cheyennes) 9,177

Total number in hostile country : : 68,638

According to the estimates given in the same report, about sixty per cent. are women; this gives 27,000 warriors within the Indian Territory, which, considering the number of bands that have never settled at any of the reservations, is a low estimate of their strength. According to the same calculation the Sioux and Cheyennes, now openly at war would be able to bring nearly 22,000 men into the field. From all accounts received from the seat of war, one fact seems clear, and it is that the estimate made as to the number of Indians actually on the war path and operating against the troops is below the real number.

Had the Indians been compelled, at an early day to adopt agriculture and stock raising for the chase—individualization of their property—submission to territorial government as wards of the nation—the sale of intoxicating drinks visited with the

penitentiary,—had they at the same time been furnish with schools and honest missionaries, the result might have been vastly different.

Strange that a philosophy so false should have been pursued for a hundred years by the most enlightened nation on earth, until annihilation becomes absolutely necessary to close the scene.

When we were a boy, we caught a young gray fox before his eyes were opened. We tamed him to the playfulness of a kitten,—but as he grew up a “gray fox,” he, one morning, took our fingers with the meat, and the result was—annihilation to the fox. Such is Indian history. Moral suasion is useless—there are hardly exceptions enough to establish the rule.

## CHAPTER II.

On the old Government map of 1842 accompanying the official report of J. N. Nicollet and J. C. Fremont, of astronomical and barometrical observations and surveys of the hydrographical basin of the Mississippi during the year 1836, to and including 1840, and long before the territory now composing Minnesota was christened, and before St. Paul was dubbed “Pigs Eye,” this territory was appropriated to and known and divided up as reservations for different sub-Indian bands.

The portion south of Fort Snelling and east of

"Mankasa" (Mankato) was known as War-pe-ku-te country. All west of Mankato River, and southwest of the Upper "Minnesotah," was known as the War-pe-ton and Sisseton country. The whole classed as Undine (or Spiritual) region; while the entire country west of St. Anthony, and north of the "Minnesotah" was known as the M-de-wa-kan-ton country, a little west of the center of which, in latitude 45, and longitude 95, Nicollet retained as the most beautiful lakes in Minnesota, the romantic Indian name of Kan-di-yo-hi.

The terms St. Anthony, Fort Snelling, Mankasa, Le Sueur, Lac qui Parle, St. Peter, Kandiyohi and Blue Earth, all find a location on Nicollet's old map. The Coteau du Greene Bois, ranging north-west and south-east through the centre of the State, constitutes the height of land from which streams flow in all directions. Small streams take their rise in Kandiyohi county and flow in all directions, the lakes being near the height of land, and are situate about 1,200 feet above the level of the sea.

Meeker and Kandiyohi counties unquestionably constitute the Garden of the State, and few will be the circling years, ere these counties will teem with the richest gifts of Ceres and be densely filled with a thriving and enterprising people.

dwelling will adorn the hillsides and peep from the numerous groves surrounding sparkling lakes and entrance the beholder as he gazes on the fairy scene outspread before him.

In 1875, Meeker county alone sent her offering to "those who hunger for bread" to the tune of six hundred thousand bushels of wheat, and in less than five years more, Meeker and Kandiyohi counties will be fully able to feed the entire State.

In the summer of 1855, John W. Huy and Ben. Brown poled a canoe up the Crow or Hassan River in search of pine timber as far as the present site of Forest City, and made a hasty exploration of the country. D. M. Hanson, Thomas H. Skinner, Fred Schultz and Dr. Ripley arrived at the site of Forest City about the same time, via Glencoe.

The following spring the county of Meeker was organized on paper—County Commissioners, D. M. Hanson, Dr. Frederick Noah Ripley and J. W. Huy; Register of Deeds, Milton G. Moore; Sheriff, Abijah Bemis.

In March, 1856, Thomas H. Skinner and John W. Huy took possession of the town-site of Forest City, and subsequently had the same surveyed and platted.

The following are the names of the several

towns in this county, with their Congressional designations and derivations:

NAMES OF FIRST SETTLERS, ETC.

(118—29 means Township 118, north of the base line, and 29 west of the fifth principal meridian, according to the United States survey, and so of the other towns hereinafter mentioned):

118—29—Collinwood; so named by the first settlers who came from Collinwood, Canada. For a few years prior to its actual settlement it was known as New Virginia. The first permanent settlements were made in May, 1866, by Oliver Rasnick, Jacob Hutchins, Thomas Hutchins, Henry Fuller and George Fuller. Town organized May 8, 1866.

O. Rasnick was the first Justice of the Peace.

The first death in the town was a child of E. K. Counts.

First couple were married in 1867, John Taylor to Miss Elizabeth Hutchins, and about the same time, Alex. Ramsey to Miss Margaret Hutchins.

118—30—Ellsworth; named at the suggestion of Jesse V. Branham, jr., after the unfortunate Col. Ellsworth whose tragic end occurred at Alexandria during the war of the rebellion, first settled in 1856, by Dr. V. P. Kennedy, T. R. Webb and Dr.

Russel Whiteman. Kennedy came in June and Webb in July.

The first child born to Dr. Whiteman the following year. The second were twins to Wm. H. Greenleaf, June, 1860—both dead.

The second death was a man by the name of Halstead, in 1862. The village of Greenleaf is embraced in this township and was founded in 1858, by W. H. Greenleaf, Dana E. King and Bennet M. and Judson A. Brink.

First school house built in 1859; first teacher, Miss Lydia Angier. First and only lawyer, Mark Warren. Rev. J. C. Whitney preached the first sermon at Greenleaf, (Presbyterian). There is one Indian Mound in the Township which has not been opened. This town was originally attached to Rice City in 1858.—organized as a separate township September 1, 1868. This township was not exempt from incidents of the Indian war in 1862.

Two weeks after the attack on Hutchinson, Caleb Sanborn having been killed at Cedar Lake the day before, a small party, consisting of Lewis Harrington, Frank Jewett, T. R. Webb, Dave Hern, Nath. Pierce, Daniel Cross and Silas Greene came out from Hutchinson for the remains of Sanborn. When north of Cedar Lake woods,

three guns were simultaneously fired by unknown hands, and Cross fell mortally wounded. Five of the party, less Webb, sprang into the double wagon and made their escape round the lake. Webb took to a small boat on the lake and paddled for Cedar Island where he was compelled to spend the night. The Indians lined the lake shore during Webb's retreat, but not till after he had reached a safe distance did he turn to the red skins and place his thumb to his nose—thus inviting them to come where he was if they wanted him.

The next morning Webb returned to Hutchinson, and as he approached town, met some fifty persons coming out to look up him and Cross.

This party recovered the remains of both Sanborn and Cross and took them to Hutchinson. It was afterward ascertained that there were thirteen Indians in the skirmish.

118—31—Greenleaf; named after Hon. Wm. H Greenleaf, who first commenced improvements by the erection of a mill dam on the site of the village of that name, and the subsequent erection of a flour and saw mill. The first settlers of this Congressional Township were three brothers Wm., Herman and Charles Kruger, in the spring of 1857, originally attached to the town of Ness—organized as town of Greenleaf, August 27, 1859,

including 118—29, 30 and 31, except sections 1 to 6 inclusive.

When we first saw Wm. H. Greenleaf, he was standing up to his knees in the mud in the outlet of "Lake Willie," artistically laying up the sods with his hands, in a fruitless endeavor to prevent water from running down hill! We are glad to say that he has had far better luck at other business since.

Lake Willie was named after U. S. Willie, Esq., a young lawyer who lived a year or two at Forest City, and died there.

Two gentlemen by the name of Orcutt and Pratt effected a settlement in this town in 1856, on land now owned by Vincent Coombs. They plowed about 3 acres, and while at dinner one day the Indians killed one of their oxen, which broke up their team, and becoming disheartened deserted their claims and went to Forest City where they remained till fall when they left the country. Branham and Whitcomb settled in 1857 and the McGannons in 1858.

118—32—Danielson, originally part of Acton, was organized distinctively March 12th, 1872, and named after Nels Danielson, who settled in this town in 1861, where he continued to reside till his death in 1870. His family still reside there.

Noah White, Esq., first settled in this town in 1857 but abandoned it in 1858, removing to Kandiyohi county where he has ever since resided and still resides. Noah, was the political "Moses" of Kandiyohi county for about 16 years. In long years gone by, when the Republican party wanted to concentrate public sentiment and obtain a full delegation from Kandiyohi county in State and District conventions, they had but to look up Noah White and the thing was fixed.

The native mosquitoes and fleas of Kandiyohi county will be long and pleasingly remembered by various politicians of Hennepin county during the past decade.

Having occasion to spend a beautiful moonlight Autumn night on one of these occasions, watching the Republican politicians, we enjoyed a nights rest on the soft side of a log with the bark on and an oak chip for a pillow, and as the silent watches of the night drove sleep from our eye lid, our position called to mind the words of a great philosopher:

"Life is an inconceivably beautiful thing, so soon as we reach that point whence we can look out upon it through a clear conscience and a character well buffeted by experience. The one diffuses a pure, heavenly light over all the strange

and complex mass which meets the eye, the other tones down our enthusiasm without destroying the vigor."

119—29—Swan Lake, was named after a lake of that name in this township—originally part of Kingston. The first settlers were men by the name of Ayres and Richardson in 1856, from Mexico, N. Y. They were surveyors. They left in 1862 and the Indians soon burned their cabin.

After the Indian war, Isaac N. and A. W. Russel, were the first settlers in 1864 or 5, and were followed soon after by a colony from Kentucky.

The village of Dassel is embraced in this town, and was platted and settled in the spring or summer of 1869, on the completion of the St. Paul and Pacific Rail Road to that place. It was organized as a separate town September 4, 1866, and the name changed to "Dassel," after a railroad gentleman of that name. The old farm or claim of Ayres and Richardson was sold and conveyed about 6 or 7 years ago to Mr. Harlow Ames.

118—30—Darwin, (organized April 5, 1858,) takes its name from a man of the 19th century who was so unfortunate as to own stock or bonds of the St. Paul & Pacific Railroad Co., and not from the originator of the Darwin-ian theory,

that "all the world and the rest of mankind" sprang originally from the monkey.

Until the railroad was built this town was known as "Rice City," named by a party of surveyors from Dubuque, who made claims on paper, and who laid out and platted a townsite which they named "Rice City," in honor of Hon Edmund Rice, of St. Paul. John Curran was one of the first settlers of this town.

119—31—Litchfield, is named after another unfortunate stockholder of the Railroad company, who, it appears, resides in the rural village of London, England. The Congressional township was originally called "Ripley" from the lake of that name in said town, and the lake was named from the fact that near its banks one Dr. Ripley was frozen to death in the winter of 1855-6, and his remains found and buried in the spring of 1856. (See chapter, Dr. Frederick N. Ripley.)

Two or three years later the name was changed to "Ness" in honor of Ole Halverson Ness, Esq. This name was taken from the name of the election or church district of Norway, whence came the first settlers of the town in July, 1856.

Ole Halverson, of Ness, now called Ole H. Ness, Henry Halverson, Ole Halverson, of Thon, now called Ole H. Thon, Nels C. Hanson

Gunder Olson and Amos Nelson, of Fosen, now called Amos N. Fosen, were the first settlers. three of them had families. They settled on their present farms in July, 1856. Amos N. Fosen, our present worthy County Treasurer, first moved into the town of Acton, but soon found that town would not hold him for scarcity of land, and he therefore finished his claim and settlement in the town of Ness—he worked the first winter for Ole H. Ness, at splitting rails, and was the first known rail splitter in the county. Henry Halverson built the first house—Ole H. Ness built the first barn and lived in it till the next season.

Ole T. Halverson was the first child born in the town, to Henry Halverson.

Lutheran Church organized in 1858, but no building erected till Litchfield was founded in 1869.

The first school district was organized in 1861 and school house built. The first teacher was John Blackwell.

The Jones family (so called) were the first five persons massacred in the Indian war, and were buried in this town in one broad grave in the cemetery of the Lutheran Church.

There are a number of small mounds simulating Indian mounds in this town, mostly in the timber, and of evidently great age. None have ever been

explored. In 1869 the town of Litchfield was platted and settled, and the county seat was removed from Forest City to Litchfield by a vote of the people in the fall of 1869. As before remarked, the town and village of Litchfield took their present name in honor of a Mr. Litchfield, of England. Mrs. Litchfield is said to have given \$2,000 to the erection of the Episcopal church, parish school and parsonage at this point.

On the present town-site, Mr. Waller's shanty was the first structure erected, and the "Litchfield House" the first building of any size. These buildings, however, were not on the original town-site.

The first building on the town-site proper, was that of Truls Nelson, on the opposite corner north of the Town Hall, and now occupied by John Peterson. B. F. Pixley's house was the second. Heard & Ward's store was the third. H. B. Johnson's and Joseph James' buildings next, and so on.

Mrs. Marietta, wife of C. O. Porter, was the first woman on the town-site to reside.—Mrs. M. L. Pixley was the second. These ladies arrived in Litchfield respectively August 26th and 27th, 1869.

There are now five church edifices here, to-wit:

Presbyterian, Episcopal, Methodist, Christian or Campbellite and Swedish Methodist; also a union school house, costing three or four thousand

dollars, and a Town and Masonic Hall, 26x72 feet, costing, when finished, about four thousand dollars. Present population, twelve hundred.

## LAWYERS.

A. C. Smith, F. Belfoy, Chas. H. Strobeck, S. A. Plumley, E. A. Campbell, N. C. Martin and L. C. Spooner.

## PHYSICIANS.

Drs. V. P. Kennedy, F. E. Bissell, and L. P. Foster.

## CLERGY.

Rev. Messrs. T. G. Crump, Episcopal; J. S. Sherill, Presbyterian; I. H. Riddick, Methodist and F. A. Grant, Christian. (See Chapter on Churches.)

Litchfield boasts a steam flour mill of 7 run of buhrs, owned by R. S. Hershey & Co.

119—32—Acton was organized April, 1858, and originally embraced 118—32, and the south half of 120—32. Acton takes its name from Acton, Canada, where the Ritchie family came from when they first settled in Acton, in 1857. In 1857 Robinson Jones, Howard Baker and mother and Abram Kelley settled here. Capt. Robinson and John Blackwell came in about the same time. All except John Blackwell had formed an acquaint-

ance with each other in a lumber camp the previous winter, on the upper Mississippi. Of the old settlers named, Abram Kelley alone remains.

The first child born in Acton was to Peter Ritchie. Jones, Howard Baker and his mother were three out of the five killed by the Indians, August 17th, 1862, at the house of Howard Baker.

120—29—Kingston; was named by Geo. A. Nourse, Esq., a lawyer, then of St. Anthony, now residing in Nevada. This town was organized April 5, 1858, and embraced 119—29, 120—29 and 121—29.

Benjamin Dorman was the first man to turn the sod in this town, while in the fall of 1857, Mr. A. P. Whitney, Henry Averill and S. B. Hutchins took possession of the town-site of Kingston, on Crow River and commenced the erection of the dam, where now stands the Kingston saw and flour mill. Whitney is now in California, Averill has gone to parts unknown, and Hutchins resides in Wright County.

Some six or eight young men—the aristocracy of Forest City—having heard of the arrival, and not having seen a lady for three or four months, joined in a "pleasure excursion" to Kingston, to see Mrs. Fitzgerald. This was the first pleasure excursion that took place in Meeker County. On be-

ing introduced to Madam Fitzgerald, she proved to be a very good, kind, straight-forward, plain-spoken woman, who remarked that the "skeeters had been awful." Slightly elevating the crinoline, she exhibited an instep swollen and distorted by mosquito bites, and assured the masculines present that that was not an over-wrought picture of her entire condition. The boys returned to Forest City wiser and more reflective, if not better men.

In 1858 some flour had been stolen from Kingston, and a search warrant was duly placed in Sheriff Jewett's hands, with the view of finding the stolen property. Examining various houses with the assistance of Deputy Sheriff Maddox, they entered the house of Madam Morris Powers. Fearing the flour might be concealed in the cellar, the deputy descended through a trap door, whereupon Madam Powers stationed herself, with a tub of hot suds at the trap door, and with a tin dipper obstructed the egress of Maddox, and he was not seen for about an hour. Maddox soon thereafter resigned his office.

120—30—Forest City received its name at the hands of Thomas H. Skinner, who entered the town-site of the U. S. Government in February, 1858. The town had been settled two and a half years previous, and among the first settlers were

Wait H. Dart, David Mitchell, W. H. Vanness, T. C. Jewett, John Whalen, Edward Campbell, Dudley Taylor, John Flynn, T. H. Skinner, D. M. Hanson, Dr. F. N. Ripley. R. Schultz, Chas Johnson, J. W. Quick, Matt Standish, John W. Huy and others.

The site of Forest City was originally intended to have been made farther up the river, in the town of Harvey, on the old Wigle claim (so called), now owned by Mr. Driver, and was to have been called by the Sioux name of Kar-i-shon or Krow.

This town was organized April 5th, 1858, embracing the east half of 120—31 and 120—30.

Of the first settlers above named, Dart, Mitchell, Vanness, Jewett, Campbell, Whalen, Schultz, and Mrs. Dudley Taylor, with their families, alone remain.

The log house now owned by Mr. John Heath, was the first public house in the county, and was kept by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Taylor. Mr. Taylor afterwards enlisted in the United States service—became disabled by the falling of the deck of the steamer "Gladiator," on the Tennessee river, and subsequently died in the State of New York, where he formerly lived.

D. M. Hanson, a fine young lawyer, and an estimable gentleman, with whom the writer was

quite well acquainted, died in Minneapolis soon after his return from Forest City, in the spring of 1856.

Dr. Ripley froze to death on the prairie seven miles south of Forest City, in the winter of 1856, and his remains were found in the spring, by Wm. S. Chapman, now of California, and buried near that beautiful lake adjoining Litchfield, which now bears, and will forever bear, his name.—(See Chapter, Dr. Frederick N. Ripley).

Thos. H. Skinner died at Milwaukee, August 20th 1863, and was buried at St. Albans, Maine ; aged 29 years. Up to the time of his death, he was President of the Forest City Town Company.

John Whalen and John Flynn came through the big woods in the spring of 1856, near Kingston, fording the Crow River at that point with the water shoulder deep. The river was swollen and the banks full from heavy rains, and they found it a vast deal easier to get into the river than to get out. Whalen finally drew himself out by a root on the bank, and Flynn was rescued by Whalen. They brought their bread from St. Anthony, and after selecting their claims, they started on their return for their families. They had one small loaf of bread two weeks old, and about the size of a ten-pound cannon ball, and of somewhat similar appearance,

which was to last them to Monticello, and until it was necessary to use it, they wrapped it in a handkerchief and used it for a pillow. The first night out, some person stole it, and they had to go through the woods without eating. Staid at Monticello one night, and were charged \$6 each for supper, breakfast, and lodging on shavings. They returned with their families, and reached their claims Oct. 22, 1856.

120—31—Harvey. This town was named in honor of James Harvey, who settled in that town in 1860, and subsequently resided at Forest City during the Indian war.

Harvey was first settled by John and Thomas Dougherty in 1856. They broke 25 acres of land that summer. A man by the name of McCue came into the town about two weeks ahead of the Doughertys, but soon left. This town was originally a part of Forest City, but set off, and organized separately in 1867. There were no marriages or deaths in this town till 1870. Dennis Dougherty and Mary Finnegan were married in May 1870. Ed. Dolan, a child eight years old, died the same year. Thomas Dougherty was the first Justice of the Peace.

Mr. E. O. Britt was among the first settlers of

this town. His mother, Charity Britt, nee Tibbetts, came with the family from Maine. She was born in Litchfield, Maine, April 3d, 1773, and is consequently now 103 years of age—the oldest woman in the county, if not the state. She pre-empted 160 acres of land.

The site of Forest City was first located within this township, and was to have been called by the Indian name of Kar-i-shon or Krow.

120—32—Swede Grove, was first settled in 1857 by N. E. Hanson, Nels Elofson, Hans Peterson, Peter E. Lund, Nels Weylander, Andrew Peterson and John Rosencranz and a few others—most, or all with families. The town was named by N. E. Hanson and Nels Elofson, from the fact that this town was settled by Swedes. This town was originally a part of Acton—was organized by itself March 15th, 1868. Nels Elofson was appointed Post-master in 1859.

121—30—Forest Prairie—is situate north of Forest City, in the big woods, and was named Forest Prairie for the same reason that the boy named his pony "Snow Ball"—because he was black as jet. It was called Forest Prairie because there was not a bit of prairie in the town. First settled in the spring of 1866, by Merrit B. Case, C. T. Groot, J. S. Reynolds, George Scrivner, George Smith, Mr.

Polk and by Stevens and Roach, mostly with families. Next year the town was pretty well settled by the arrival of new-comers. This town was duly organized June 10th, 1867. Mr. Stoors was the first Post-master, in 1867.

121—31—Manannah ; was organized as a township, April 5th, 1858, and originally embraced the west half of 120—31, 120—32, 121—31, and 121—32.

On the 15th of November, 1855, Chris Davis, Green Sykes, Ziba Caswell and Nathan C. Caswell left Monticello, Wright County in search of a mill-site and farm-land, passing through the "big woods," so-called, and struck the prairie near the present site of Darwin, thence north to what is now Forest City, thence down Crow River about 10 miles, and thence on a straight shoot back to Monticello. Trying it again, on the 10th day of December 1855. Ziba Caswell and N. C. Caswell started for the big prairie, and emerged from the woods near where Kingston now stands, thence up stream past Forest City, (then a City of "Magnificent Distances," no buildings obstructing the view) Harvey, Manannah, Union Grove and Swede Grove, thence returning, concluded to trade with "Uncle Sam" for some claims at Manannah on tick. Arrived at Monticello, December 24th, 1855.

On this second trip, the only white men they met on the prairie, were Thomas H. Skinner and D. M. Hanson, who were in camp at Kar-i-shon.

In 1856, Alonzo, Ziba, Silas, Albert and N. C. Caswell captured the town, and together with James Nelson, Edward Brown, and A. D. Pierce took up the claims around the old townsite, and built the first shanties in Manannah, backing their provisions from Monticello. Ziba Caswell and one J. W. Walker surveyed and named the town-site of Manannah in December, 1856. The settlement was increased the same fall by the addition of Carlos Caswell, John Tower, Andrew Hamilton, and Lucy Ann Lobdell, nee Slater, (See Chapter, "A Wild Woman's History"). On the 4th of March, 1857, the Caswells put up the first building of any size, designed for a hotel. Prior to the organization of the town, the County Commissioners appointed N. C. Caswell Road Supervisor, April 27th, 1857, being the first office ever held in said town. The first prairie broken by the Caswells, May 4th, 1857.

First marriage was James Nelson and Elizabeth A. Caswell, by E. B. Kingsley, J. P., in the spring of 1857. First child born was Hattie Estella Kimball. First death was Samuel Clyde.

In 1857 J. W. Walker built a saw mill on Crow River at this point, which was carried off by the

freshet in 1859, and was never rebuilt. Two or three years since, Mr. N. C. Hines erected a fine flour and saw mill, a mile or two below the old site, and a fine village has sprang up in consequence.

A stockade was erected at the old town-site of Manannah in 1863, to aid in the protection of the settlements of that region, and a few soldiers stationed there by Col. Ney-Smith, of Wisconsin, being a portion of his regiment. It was here, one fine sun-shiny day of that year, that we greeted Hon. M. J. Severance in his military blouse, sunning himself on a log as high private. He was in the line of his duty.

This town was a point of tragic interest during the fall of 1862, connected with the Indian War, an account of which will be found elsewhere in this volume.

121—32—Union Grove ; was first settled in 1856 by Lyman Allen, Andrew Hamilton, and by two other men by the names of Baker and Haywood. Allen and Haywood returned to Massachusetts in 1860. Baker is dead. Mr. Allen named the town, wherefore or for what is unknown. We have been promised a sketch of the early settlement and incidents of this town, but have thus far failed to receive it. This town was duly organized April 18, 1866.

117—31—Cedar Mills ; this town took its name from Cedar Lake, situate in that locality, and the lake received its christening at the hands of Nicolet and Fremont, from the fact of an island in the lake covered with red cedar. It was hence designated on the old map as Ran-ti-tia-wita, the Indian for "Red Cedar Island Lake."

This town was first settled in 1856 by Daniel Cross, who was killed by the Indians in 1862. The widow and family of three children still reside on the old claim.

In 1857 R. J. Brodwell, O. S. Merriam, Philander Ball, Geo. R. Jewett and a few others settled here. Mr. Nichols built a flour mill at this point in 1858, with three run of stone—capacity, 60 barrels per day.

116—32—Cosmos ; was named by an eccentric gentleman, an early settler by the name of Hoyt, who was frozen to death four years ago last winter, in an effort to go on foot to the Minnesota River.

Dr. Kennedy says the word "Cosmos" is Greek, and the Dr. knows, and that it signifies "the universe." The Dr. is an original Greek scholar, and if he has deceived us, we shall never forgive him—never. We think the Dr. is right, for the Greek order of architecture pretty generally prevails in

this township, mostly of the plain Doric, which was invented by the Greeks, and it was in this very town that the rigor of the seasons obliged the settlers to construct shelters from the inclemency of the weather, and here they first learned to plant trees on end and then lay others across to support a covering. The bands which connected those trees at top and bottom, first gave them a clear idea of the base and capitol of pillars.

Mathews and Eddy were among the early settlers, but it was not much settled till after the Indian war. This town and Cedar Mills were voted from McLeod county, and became legally attached to Meeker County in 1871.

This town is now settled up with a hardy, enterprising people.

### CHAPTER III.

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All history, except of wars, is usually made up of little things, incidents, waifs floating on the stream of time, seemingly of no account as they pass, exciting, it may be, a smile, hardly worthy of a record, and yet in the fitful passage of a century, and the historian looks back for those little incidents with an interest that would not surprise us, could we realize a tithe of their importance, in the estimation of those who shall come after us.

Had we a record of all the little historical reminiscences, as they transpired, connecting the present with the past of ancient Jerusalem, we would probably not be surprised and mortified at so much of its present disgusting appearance of squallor and misery, bodily, mentally and morally,

as almost leads us to doubt the integrity of scripture, when we there read of its ancient splendor and magnificence. A few centuries of history lost to that ancient city, made up of little things perhaps, has produced more skepticism in the world than all the false doctrine that has ever been practiced since the christian era.

Waterloo and Austerlitz—so boldly emblazoned on the page of history, were never of a tithe of the importance, as the silent efforts of the people during the last century to peacefully qualify themselves and their children to maintain by education and intelligence, the vital principles of self-government.

In a former chapter, we gave the date of settlement of each town in Meeker County, and the names of a few of the earliest settlers. We now propose a random account of circumstances and incidents such as we think will not only interest the readers at this day, but be of more material value in the future. In this we are not confined to civil and judicial history, for while we were considered as "afar off" on the frontier, carving or trying to carve out a name and a future for our county, we found a national war of gigantic proportions in the South, and while congratulating ourselves that men and money were all that would

be expected of us, and that we were fortunately far removed from bloody scenes, an Indian war of savage ferocity suddenly burst over our heads, and came near to our total extinguishment.

Between a depletion of men for the South, and self-defence on the frontier, there were few in Meeker County to indulge an idle hour.

The summer of 1856, Benjamin Dorman commenced the first farming operations, by breaking the prairie sod. Morris Powers was the first to follow suit. Powers died the next season. Dorman "still lives." Their farms were situate between Forest City and Kingston.

The county was named in honor of Hon. B. B. Meeker, of St. Anthony—why or wherefore is unknown, unless, indeed, the Italian climate of the "Big Prairie," the richness of her soil, and the beauty of the surroundings, were found typified in the geniality of the Judge's temperament, and the quiet, good-natured rotundity of his person. Judge Meeker died at St. Anthony a couple of years since.

The 4th of July, 1856, was first celebrated west or the big woods, at Forest City. On the 22nd day of June, 1856, Rudolph Schultz, Chas. Johnson and Jas. W. Quick backed a liberty-pole out

of the woods and raised it in Forest City, preparatory to the 4th. A small tin pan was well scoured with muck, and nailed on the top for a ball, and the stars and stripes were duly raised. The flag was made of white cotton furnished by T. C. Jewett; red flannel by Matt. Standish, and blue denims by John W. Huy—at a loss to each, respectively, of a “biled” shirt, one pair red flannel drawers, and one pair of overalls. What took place on the 4th of July, was never recorded.

The first child born in the county in July, 1856, was Miss Sarah Jane—born in a camp wagon—to Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Dougherty. The next, and first male child born, was Ole T. Halverson, to Henry Halverson. Both children still live in the county.

The first death in the county was a young man by the name of Frank Parsons, Nov. 12th, 1856, aged 20 years. He was buried on the town-site of Forest City.

The first marriage in the county was Joseph Weymer to Mary Dorman, in August, 1857, by the Rev. John Robson. They “still live.”

The first sermon preached was by Rev. John Robson, (Methodist) Nov. 1856. He was from Boston, and in 1859 he returned to that city, and died at Melrose, March 5th, 1867. He erected, and

operated the first saw mill at Forest City—it was run by steam.

On the 22nd of March, 1858, A. C. Smith, Register of the U. S. Land Office, and John D. Evans, Receiver, arrived, with the archives of said office, at Forest City, and with others to the number of a baker's dozen, were feasted with fresh oysters in the log cabin of his honor the President of the Town Company, T. H. Skinner, and which was demolished some years since, by the vandal hands of Mr. Mallory, who now owns the ground on which it stood.

The arrival of the U. S. Land Office at Forest City was considered an important era in the history of the county, and gave quite an impetus to its settlement.

Of the early settlers in the county, many of them remain, while others have gone to parts unknown, or paid the debt of nature. There are from 75 to 25 voters who now reside in the county who were here prior to the commencement of the Indian War.

The financial crisis of 1857 and '58 did not facilitate a very rapid growth to Meeker County. At the commencement of the civil war, she had about 300 voters. No county in the State furnished more men in proportion to its population, than

Mecker—the first installment in 1861 and the second in 1862-3. Over 125 men from the county found their way into the Union armies, many of whom were not credited to the county or State, as they had previously removed therefrom. in consequence of the Indian hostilities—none were ever drafted—and Meeker County is yet credited with six three-year men, or 18 years service in the NEXT WAR ! But three were known of the entire number, to have been killed in battle, viz : Reuben Wait, Wellington S. Cates and William Johnson—some 10 or 15 died in hospital.

The following is believed to be a very correct list of volunteers from Meeker County, with the number of their regiment in the State, so far as known :

NAMES.	REG. &c.	NAMES.	REG. &c.
Angler, Albert.....	Third.	Kennedy, V P.....	Fifth
Allen, L. D.....	Fourth.		
Atkinson, J B.....	Capt. Artil.	Lawrence, A C.....	Fourth
		Luton, Henry.....	Cavalry
Bradshaw, J H.....	Third.	Little, G W P.....	Cavalry
Butler, Daniel.....	Fourth	Larson, Andrew.....	Cavalry
Brink, J A.....	Scout		
Baldwin, S D L.....	Fourth	Mixter, Horace.....	Sharp Shoot
Borgusrode, R.....	Fifth	McCaun, Michael....	Fourth
Bennett, Wm P.....	Hatch Bat.	McGraw, Daniel.....	Hatch Bat.
Branham, E F.....	Second	McGraw, Cornelius..	Hatch Bat.
Branham, Wm.....	2d Cavalry	Murphy, James.....	Eighth
		Mattson, Paul.....	Sixth
Campbell, Dan.....	Second	Mickelson, H.....	Cavalry
Campbell Wm M....	Cavalry	Mayhee, Chas.....	Hatch Bat.
(re-enlisted as Vet'n)		McGaffy, Henry.....	Sharp Shoot
Campbell E A.....	Cavalry		
(re-enlisted as Vet'n)		Nichols, Seth .....	Fourth
Clinton, H.....	Second	Nelson, Andrew.....	Second
Chapin Isaac.....	Second		
Cates W S.....	Fourth	Oaks, O.....	Second

Caswell, William.....	Cavalry	Oleson, A.....	Tenth
Deary, James.....	2d Cavalry	Page, Phillip.....	Sharp shoot
Delong, Albert.....	Scout	Page, George.....	Cavalry Vet
DeCoster, F V.....	4th, Cap.	Pottle, Ben.....	Fifth
Dunn, James W.....	Fourth	Penbody, Chas.....	Hatch Bat.
Evans, Ed.....	Brack's Bat	Peterson, Ole.....	Sixth
Eastman, Rufus.....	First	Peterson, John.....	Third
Fisher, Jasper.....	2nd Cavalry	Reef, Emanuel.....	Hatch Bat.
Fitzgerald, John.....	2nd Cavalry	Rhodes, Dan.....	Fourth
Flynn, Michael.....	2nd Cavalry	Rizz, J. T.....	Second
Fallon, Thomas.....	Fourth	Rogers, Levenson.....	Sharp Shoot
Fallon, John.....	Fourth	Rogers, Jerome.....	Cavalry
Foster, William.....	Third	Sholes jr., Geo. S.....	Second
Grayson, Thomas....	Hatch Bat.	Stearn, Peter.....	Cavalry
Howe, Frank.....	Hatch Bat.	Schultz, Carl.....	5th Cavalry
Howe, Henry S.....	Hatch Bat.	Salisbury, J B.....	Hatch Bat.
Hutchins, Samuel....	Cavalry	Stark, Felix.....	Third
Hall, Wm H.....	Fourth	Stinchfield, C H.....	Captain
Hutchins, Charles....	Second	Taylor, Dudley.....	Fourth
Hutchins, Moses.....	Second	Taylor, Albert.....	Third
Hoyt, Azro Buck....	16th Wis.	Taylor, Joel.....	Fourth
Johnson, Lorain.....	Third	Todd, Jerome.....	Third
Johnson, William....	Cavalry	Walte, Reuben.....	
Johnson, Gilbert....	Second	Walker, J W.....	Sharp Shoot
Johnson, Chris.....	Second	Whitcomb, Geo. C..	Capt. Caval
Koch, Wm.....	Cavalry	Whitney, Augustus..	Fourth
Koch, Maximilian...	Cavalry	Wigle, John.....	1st Cavalry
Koch, Louis.....	Heavy Artl.	Williams, Augustus..	Sixth
		Willis, William.....	Third

## CHAPTER IV.

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The Indian War formed a tragical episode in the history of Meeker County

About 11 o'clock A. M., of Sunday, the 17th of August, 1862, the first deliberate massacre of the brutal Sioux outbreak, took place 13 miles west of Forest City in the town of ACTON.

Six Indians came first to the house of Robinson Jones, and thence to that of Mr. Howard Baker, where they deliberately shot five persons, viz : Robinson Jones, Howard Baker, Mrs. Ann Baker, Viranus Webster and Miss Clara D. Wilson, (the last named, at Jones' house). This was the commencement of that terrible Indian scourge, which resulted in the massacre of about nine hundred whites, on the frontier of Minnesota in the fall of 1862.

The preliminary tragedy at Acton, was not the result of a drunken riot—but was the commencement of a premeditated design to exterminate the whites from this region of country, although probably this early commencement, by an insignificant band, was not a part of the programme of Little Crow and other leaders. I allude to this, to correct errors which appear to have already been manufactured into departmental history. The Secretary of War reported to Congress, and all the pretended histories yet written, CRAW FISH to the fur traders, and allege a drunken broil as the commencement of the affair, and also make statements credited to the reports of a child afterwards found in Jones' house on the eve of the 17th, about 8 o'clock. Mr. John Blackwell, a reliable citizen, now deceased, found a little grand child of Mrs. Ann Baker, 18 months old, on the floor in Jones' house (the only one left or found in the house) and took it away—this child was too young to talk and was totally unconscious of its tragic surroundings.

It was lying upon the floor where it appeared to have cried itself to sleep.

Whether the Indians considered the child too insignificant to kill, or did not see it at all, cannot be known, the latter supposition is probably correct.

One writer says that the child lay on the bed and witnessed the scalping of his sister, but this is a mistake. The bed had not been tumbled and no other act done indicating that the Indians ever went into the house, and the girl had not been scalped or mutilated in any way but lay partly upon her back in a pool of blood just where she fell.

After Baker and Webster ceased to breathe, their wives started for the house of Mr. John Blackwell, their nearest neighbor, Mrs. Baker carrying in her arms an infant child preserved from the massacre.

When they reached Blackwell's they found no one at home, and proceeded on to the next neighbor, named Olson, a blacksmith, whom the Indians afterwards killed.

Late in the afternoon Blackwell, on horseback, came riding leisurely home, and learned from Ole H. Ness, Esq., whom he met on the prairie, the terrible news, which he at first could not believe, but Mr. Ness advised him to go to the house of Olson where the women then were and learn the particulars from them which he did, and learned from them that their husbands were dead before they left the house, and that two other persons, Robinson Jones and Mrs. Baker (mother of Howard Baker) were both shot, were both in great agony and evidently dying; that Mrs. Baker was lying in the house and

Jones in the yard near the house; that the latter came there from his own house but a short time before where he had left the said niece and child.

The fate of those children was then problematical, fearing the worst, the Indians having gone in that direction. Blackwell concluded at once, that to find out what had become of them was an imperative duty, and immediately rode back to where he had left Ole H. Ness and found him with Henry Hulverson, A. Nelson Fosen and several others who had assembled and were discussing the matter.

The men were all in favor of going at once to the scene of the tragedy and securing, if alive, the girl and child.

It was after dark when they arrived at Jones house and the child was found alive—the remainder of the story has been told, and needs not to be repeated.

The child was brought to Forest City and kept some months by Mr. and Mrs. Jewett and subsequently placed in charge of Mr. Charles H. Ellis of Otsego, Wright county, since which time we have lost track of him.

Jones gave the Indians no liquor, and while there was liquor in Jones' house, up to the time of the inquest on Monday afternoon, there was no ap-

pearance of its having been molested. At the time of the inquest all the liquor in the house was poured on the ground.

To show the evident design of these Indians to commit the tragedy at this point, we give the testimony of the wife of Mr Howard Baker at the coroner's inquest conducted by A. C. Smith, then Judge of Probate and acting County Attorney. Her testimony was as follows:

"About 11 o'clock A. M. four Indians came into our house, staid about 15 minutes, got up and looked out, had the men take down their guns and shoot them off at a mark, then bantered for a trade with Jones. About 12 o'clock two more Indians came and got some water; our guns were not reloaded; the Indians loaded their guns in the dooryard; I went back into the house, did not suspect anything at the time; supposed they were going away; next I knew I heard the report of a gun and saw Webster fall; he stood and fell near the door; another Indian came to the door and aimed at Howard Baker and shot; did not kill him at that time; he shot the other barrel of his gun at Howard and he fell.

"My mother walked to the door and another Indian shot her; she turned to run and fell into the buttery; they shot at her twice as she fell.

I tried to get out of the window, but fell down cellar; saw Mrs. Webster pulling her husband into the house, dont know where she was prior to this; Indians immediately left the house; while I was in the cellar I heard firing out of doors.

Jones said they were Sioux Indians and that he was well acquainted with them. Two of the Indians had on white men's coats; one quite tall, one quite small, one thick and chubby and all middle aged Indians, one had two feathers in his cap and one had three. Jones said "they asked me for whisky but I would not give them any."

This testimony shows a deliberate intention to massacre Jones' family. The facts are, that Robinson Jones kept a sort of frontier public house and kept various articles of groceries, &c., with which he used to traffic with the Indians, with whom he was well acquainted, and obtained their furs and other proceeds of their hunting expeditions, and they had by some means got into his debt 40 or 50 dollars. which sum Jones had made arrangements to have paid out of their annuities.

Certain Indian traders claimed the monopoly of the fur trade, and had for some years been in the habit of making advances to the Indians with the understanding that the Indians were to return to the traders the proceeds of the chase—the balance if

any to be jerked (in a manner only known to Indian traders) out of the next succeeding annuities.

Jones' little traffic was interfering quite materially with those traders, and was setting a bad precedent, and this may, perhaps, furnish a better clue than whisky, to the destruction of Jones' family, and which in its results, produced far more than the traders bargained for. The Indians were dissatisfied with all the traders, and Jones with the rest.

Any one who understands the Indian trading system, as sanctioned by the Indian Department at Washington, can fill up the balance of the picture—those who do not, will never know any more about the origin of the Indian massacre than they do now.

On Monday morning the 18th of August, news of the Acton massacre reached Forest City, and in less than an hour A. C. Smith, J. B. Atkinson, Milton Gorton and a few others accompanied by Mrs. Gorton and Mrs. Jewett, were on their way to the scene of the tragedy—with increasing numbers they arrived at Acton some sixty strong—held an inquest and buried the dead. On their return in the evening, the whole community was in a panic and appeared to be in Forest City.

An inquest was held as above stated and while

engaged with the inquest a band of eleven mounted Indians came in sight of the place where the people were assembled, whereupon a detail of our mounted men gave chase and drove them off into Kandiyohi county.

Subsequent developments rendered it certain that those Indians had no hand in the Acton tragedy, and in fact knew nothing about it at that time.

On Tuesday, news arrived of the outbreak on the Minnesota River and Mr. Smith prepared a letter to Gov. Ramsey, demanding guns and ammunition, and of six or seven hundred people in Forest City, Jesse V. Branham sen., then 60 years of age, was the only one to volunteer and obligate himself to take it to the Governor in St. Paul—100 miles in twenty-four hours.

Father Branham performed the service in nineteen hours on Wednesday, on horseback, riding the first nineteen miles bareback!

The following is a copy of the somewhat laconic letter of the Judge.

FOREST CITY, Aug. 20th, (6 A. M.) 1862,

HIS EXCELLENCY, ALEXANDER RAMSEY, GOVERNOR, &c.—SIR—In advance of the news from the Minnesota River, the Indians have opened on us in Meeker. It is war! A few propose to

make a stand here. Send us, forthwith, some good guns, and ammunition to match.

Yours Truly, A. C. SMITH.

On receiving this letter about 1 o'clock A. M. of the 21st, Governor Ramsey with a promptitude which has ever distinguished him in his official business, found Mr. Geo. C. Whitcomb in St. Paul (County Treasurer of Meeker County) and directed 75 stand of Springfield muskets with a suitable amount of fixed ammunition, to be placed in his charge, with transportation to Forest City, where he arrived about 11, A. M. of the 23d,

In the meantime about all the people had left Forest City and but few were known to be in the County.

On the morning of the arrival of these guns there were but thirteen men and three women on the townsite of Forest City, and nobody west of us. Their names are worth recording, for it was the decision of the little band at this point on the morning of August 23d that saved all there was worth saving west of the Mississippi River.

Their names are A. C. Smith, J. B. Atkinson, T. C. Jewett, Milton Gorton, Geo. S. Sholes, sen., Thos. H. Skinner, James M. Harvey, Wm. Towler, Henry L. Smith, Thomas Grayson, Judson A. Stanton, Hamlet Stevens, Sylvester Stevens, Mrs.

Jewett, Mrs. Whitcomb and Mrs. Brown.

During the week previous one hundred and seventy teams—mostly double, passed through Forest City on their way “out to the Mississippi River”—averaging from five to twelve persons to a team, with such goods and chattels as could be hastily packed on the wagon for immediate use. Seventy two of these had left on the morning of the 22d, and before the arrival of the guns—the persons above named had also discussed the propriety of vacating home and country, when Whitcomb hove in sight “over the hill by “Uncle Ikes” a bakers dozen of caps and stove pipe hats went up about as high as single arms could toss them.

Whitcomb passed through Hutchinson and finding the boys there about as destitute as we, allowed them to subtract 31 of the guns and a part of the ammunition from his ambulance, leaving us but 44 guns and 2000 rounds.

On Sunday the 24th, a military organization was effected and by the next day over thirty had joined and a portion were mounted, all comers were thereafter politely required to do military duty.

The following is a copy of the article of compact, viz.

“We the undersigned do solemnly swear to bear true allegiance to the United States and the State of Minnesota and the officers which may be elec-

ted or appointed over us, to the best of our ability. in accordance with CAPTAINS COMMISSION ISSUED TO G. C. WHITCOMB, BY COL. H. H. SIBLEY !! bearing date August 20th, 1862, (mustered in, August 24th, 1862.)

J. B. Atkinson,  
O. B. Todd,  
J. Heath,  
J. V. Branham jr.,  
S. W. White,  
Jas. Lang.  
Samuel Hutchins,  
Albert Sperry,  
A. C. Smith,  
J. B. Garrison,  
Thos. Grayson,  
Jos. Thomas,  
Oslog Olson,  
F. G. Gould,  
E. A. Chapin,  
R. B. Ralston,  
Henry Johnson,  
A. Hamilton,  
H. Lutons,  
H. Behrmann,

M. Gorton.  
A. F. Heath,  
Wm. Caswell,  
G. S. Sholes sen.,  
Chas. D. Maybee,  
Sylvester Stevens,  
Patrick Condon,  
J. H. Bradshaw,  
Andrew Nelsor  
Dan. McGraw,  
O. E. Payson,  
Thos. Ragan,  
H. Stevens,  
Alga Olson,  
Wm. Branham,  
Ell Gibbins,  
H. S. Howe,  
Lory Smith,  
Chas. Kruger,  
Nels Tornom,

Jas. M. Harvey,  
G. W. Waggoner,  
H. J. Hill,  
Jerome Rogers,  
Herman Kruger,  
Oliver Gibbins,  
T. C. Jewett,  
W. Johnson,  
Michael McGraw,  
Geo. R. Page,  
Jesse F. Cobb,  
Henry L. Smith,  
Alfred Mousley,  
A. B. Hoyt,  
D. Chapin,  
Wm. Wilcox,  
H. Mickelson,  
N. H. White,  
D. M. Holbrook,  
E. Swoutart,

G. C. Whitcomb claimed to be Captain by virtue of Col. Sibley's commission and his receipt for the guns and refused to give them up under any other circumstance.

The following were thereupon elected officers, viz ;

1st Lieutenant J. B. Atkinson,  
2nd do H. Stevens,  
1st Sergeant Wm. Branham,  
2nd do H. S. Howe,  
3d do Dan. McGraw,  
4th do F. G. Gould,  
1st Corporal A. F. Heath,

2nd Corporal H. J. Hill,  
3d do T. C. Jewett,  
4th do Sam Hutchins,  
5th do J. M. Harvey,  
6th do R. B. Ralston,  
7th do N. H. White,  
8th do A. B. Hoyt.

The 44 Springfield Muskets were distributed to the men as far as they went—remainder unarmed, except with a few Belgian guns that had been re-

ceived from some quarter, and as it was thought best to have the men armed, all mounted, and as we had but 15 horses and it was ascertained that a party of skedadlers were yet lingering in Kingston, a detail was made to the extent of all the horses on hand, with a man and gun on each, to go to Kingston and seize horses.

The following were detailed for that pleasing duty.

1st Lieutenant	J. B. Atkinson,	2nd Corp'l	H. J. Hill,
1st Sergeant	Wm. Branham,	3rd do	T. C. Jewett,
2nd Sergeant	H. S. Howe,	4th, do	Sam Hutchins,
1st Corp'l	A. F. Heath,	5th do	E. B. Ralston,
	O. B. Todd,		G. W. Waggoner,
	C. McGraw,		Michael McGraw,
	H. Kruger,		F. G. Gould
			A. Hamilton.

Eight officers and seven privates—and this was the first military movement in the county, and was made of the right material.

They went to Kingston armed and equipped, whereupon the first Lieutenant declared MARTIAL LAW! ordered T. C. Jewett to occupy the Clear Water bridge and allow none to escape unless they could speak the word plain—very, very plain, which one or two are said to have done—cabbaged 23 horses (the best to be had) and returned with their booty to Forest City.

Forage detail; B. Cobb, J. A. Stanton, DeLamater and Oliver Gibbins.

Stock guard; W. H. Towler and Gottlip Reef.

Thus ended Sunday's exploits August 24th 1862.

## CHAPTER V.

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The Adjutant General might well be excused in styling us "Irregular" when connected with the fact that the horses were cabbaged upon democratic principles—no partiality being shown among horses or men—all were taken that could be found—in size of horses, from the Indian pony to the trace horse weighing 1,600, with switches from 8 inches to 3 feet long, and soldiers to match from five feet two, to six feet eight, with weight from 110 to 240 lbs., some in stoga boots, and others in nature's moccasins. The Adjutant General must have been a man of extraordinary genius to have found any other name for us than "irregular."

On Monday morning, August 25th, a detail of 27 men was made for the purpose of visiting Monongalia county--now part of Kan-di-yo-hi—in pursuit

of Indians, returning on the 27th, having penetrated some thirty-five or forty miles west, and having seen no Indian's but buried seven mutilated bodies in all and passed the ruins of three dwellings and quite a number of mutilated carcasses of dead cattle.

The following is a copy of Quarter Master's commission issued to James M. Harvey, Esq.

FOREST CITY, Aug. 28th, 1862.

I hereby appoint Jas. M. Harvey to serve as Quarter Master for "Meeker County Volunteers," and he is hereby authorized and empowered to exercise the duties of the office.

On Wednesday the 27th of August, the following named persons, residents of Manannah, left Forest City to obtain stoves bedding, provisions, stock, etc., to-wit: Linus Howe, David Hoar, Chauncy Wilson, Moody Caswell, Thomas Ryckman, James Nelson, Phillip H. Deck, Wil-mot Maybee, N. C. Caswell, Joseph Page and R. D. C. Cressy. Arriving at the house of Maybee the party took dinner, thence went to Manannah to the house of Carlos Caswell—saw no Indians—left a yoke of cattle in Caswell's barn, intending to return and pass the night there, thence the party went two miles to the house of Silas Caswell, and loaded Maybee's two-horse wagon with bed-

ding and provisions, whereupon Maybee and Page started with Maybee's team, and Deck and Howe with Deck's one-horse vehicle, on their return to the residence of Carlos Caswell, the balance of the party scattering for the purpose of recovering stock. Just as Maybee's and Deck's teams went into Caswell's door-yard, they were fired upon by a party of Indians concealed behind a pile of lumber and a fence, and some in a corn-field.

Page was killed, and fell from the wagon, Deck and Howe rode about twenty rods, when they too fell, fatally pierced by bullets. Maybee ran his horses about forty rods, when he was headed off by the savages, whereupon he left his team and ran about thirty rods further, in the direction of the river, where he was shot and instantly killed.

Those exciting scenes were witnessed by Wilson and Ryckman at a distance of about sixty rods, but they were in no condition to render the least assistance, their guns being on the wagon.

The Indians about fifteen in number, after securing the horses and wagons, started west, passing within thirty yards of Nelson and N. C. Caswell, who mistaking them for white men let them pass unmolested—but followed at a safe distance behind for about a mile, the redskins stopping once, apparently to form an acquaintance, but soon drove

off at a rapid rate and were seen no more.

The remainder of the party returned to Forest City—Wilson and Ryckman—via Main Prairie, which they deemed quite the safest route.

Howe, Maybee, Deck and Page were among the best men in the county.

Mr. Howe had been a county commissioner most of the time for three years previous.

On the morning of the 28th, Lieut. Atkinson with a detail of 24 men was sent to Manaunah; charged with the melancholy duty of burying the dead.

On the 23d. Mark Warren Esq., county Atty. for Meeker county, was arrested at Monticello and returned to Forest City under guard, on the grave charge of being a "Copperhead." Copperheads were supposed to be in league with the Indians as well as the South. Warren was furloughed at Forest City.

On the night of the 27th, while Jesse V. Branham jr., was standing guard at the creek just out of Forest City on the south, A. C. Smith, E. S. Fitch and Mark Warren taking a circuit of the guard, came up to sentinel Branham, and while conversing with the sentinel, Warren disappeared in the star-light and was not seen again till the next spring. When Warren departed Jesse duly

exercised his lungs in affectionate efforts for his return, but concluded not to follow him many miles south that night as it was too dark to use a needle gun!

When Warren returned he had a couple of Indian ponies and said he had been off on the plains as a guide for Col. Sibley.

He was a singular genius—the world would never have been complete without him.

Educated as a lawyer in the office of Hon. J. M. McShafter, then of Vermont—since of California—he early settled on a pre-emption claim in the town of Rice City in this County, where he lived a number of years, was County Commissioner at times, exhibiting in business transactions a good sound judgment, made but little improvement on his farm, was at peace with all the world, no enemies, a democrat from childhood, his time was principally divided in his cabin between praying and swearing—'twas difficult to tell which service he engaged in with the most zeal.

He was one fall a Democratic candidate for the Legislature and instead of electioneering for votes, kept steady at his work, and one day while he was carrying the hod, tending mason at Greenleaf, the Hon. Thomas Cowan from St. Peter, who was that season stumping this Congressional District,

arrived at Greenleaf and running against a man working mortar with a hoe, enquired for Hon. Mark Warren, candidate for the Legislature from this District.

Mark looked at Cowan for a moment encased in black broad cloth and kid gloves, then dropping his hoe, raised both hands above his head and exclaimed, loud enough to be heard half a mile, "I'm your man by G—d sir." Should friend Warren still be in the land of the living, and his eye chance to meet this, he will be after us with a sharp stick for some part of his "descriptive roll."

On the 30th, (Saturday) a detail was made of 24 men to go to Hutchinson with the view of obtaining the guns left there by Whitcomb, but the paucity of their defensive impliments induced the Hutchinson boys to hold on to the guns.

The detail returned to Forest City on Sunday the 31st.

On the first of September another detail was made of 17 men of the company and several citizens for the purpose of visiting Green Lake, and for the ostensible purpose of relieving a family said to be on the island in said lake in a helpless condition. It probably should have been Norway Lake as there are no islands in Green Lake where a family could have been secreted.

The history of this detail is not material as it returned the same day reporting a skirmish at Swede Grove with the Indians. Two Indians reported killed and one of our men Sam. Hutchins, wounded in the thigh by a musket ball.

On the morning of the second day of September another detail of twenty soldiers and twenty citizens was sent out for the purpose of rescuing the family mentioned before, and as all could not be mounted it was thought best to go in wagons.

The detail had proceeded as far as where Hoken Peterson formerly resided when they halted for dinner.

Some of the boys being near home obtained leave to visit the house about one mile from camp, on promise that they would bring back watermelons for the whole company—after being gone a short time one of them came running back with his arms full of melons and crying Indians! Indians!! The company being unable to see any Indians from their location in the low ground one of the party was ordered "to run his head out on the knoll," near by "and take a look." He did so and reported twelve Indians advancing from the timber near by, in the direction of camp, and after being ordered back by the Captain, looking around he saw some twenty or more mounted In-

dians approaching on our west, and the teams were at once ordered to retreat in the direction of Forest City, And they did retreat for a fact. It was a race for life and home.

Their ma-ma's didn't know they were out!

Horses that were a little slow, were renewed in their activity by the point of the bayonet. In the flight our amiable Captain lost his hat and was unable to recover it, on account of two or three Indians that were within a half mile of them.

After this wild flight of some two miles, the teams were ordered to halt, as some of the horses were about giving out, and being considered safe, as the enemy were left at least one mile behind.

They had only been halted for a moment when one of the teams came rushing by and one of the boys thinking he would be left, sprang for the wagon, striking the back of his gun on the side of the box—the gun “went off” wounding O. B. Todd in the leg and barely missing D. Chapin, tearing his cartridge box and bayonet scabbard, to shreds.

After resting a few minutes the party proceeded toward Forest City, without any further accident except the miring and leaving of one of E. O. Britt's horses, while with the other Mr. Britt came to Forest City in advance of the party and ordered all the women and children into the hotel of Lieut.

Atkinson, and for the remainder of the men left in Forest City to come out and meet the company; as the Indians were coming into town.

There were about a baker's dozen of men and boys left in Forest City, and arming themselves with whatever they could find marched out towards "Uncle Ikes" with Judge Smith at their head armed with an old double barrel bogus stub and-twist-shot gun, and three butcher-knives under the waist-bands of his pants. This was believed to be the first, last and only time that the Judge ever commanded a company of Irregular Volunteer Militia, and is a full report of all of his military exploits.

At the time Capt. Whitcomb made his last "double quick" toward Forest City and thought it safe to leave Britt's horse sticking in the mud with forty men at command—there were just two Indians in sight.

There were various men among our people, who "lived fast", between the 17th of August and the 4th. of September, 1862—some in tragedy and some in comedy—far more peril to individuals than to companies of men, assembled for mutual protection.

We could wish that we had a sketch of all such, including the hair-breadth escapes of men and fam-

ilies; but the facts are not furnished us, and we cannot do justice to the parties in interest from rumors obtained at the time, or from our recollection of circumstances.

Few men had more difficulty in getting out of the prairie than our townsman Andrew Nelson—the following is but one week of his life:

Mr. N. a native of Sweden and but slightly acquainted in this county, at the time, was a single man and residing in Monongalia county.

On the 21st of August 1862 he was engaged at Foot's place haying, with several other parties.

About 4 P. M. his brother-in-law, Swanson, passed Foot Lake and gave the first alarm—Nelson spent some time in assisting Swanson, who had a wife and three children to get under way—with but an ox-team—a load of hay had to be dumped and wagon body substituted for the hay rack—Nelson took charge of some 40 head of cattle, hastily collected, which he intended to drive to a place of safety. In all this he was delayed till dark and he had hardly got off the premises when the Indians were on the ground.

Two cow-bells—40 cattle and the darkness favored Nelson and preserved his scalp. The Indians were first discovered within ten paces and supposing them to be white men, Nelson en-

quires "how goes it?" getting no answer, but hearing steps approaching he quietly slid into a cornfield close by. From the cornfield he ran into Mud Lake, where he found a desirable resting place for fifteen or twenty minutes, representing Moses in the bulrushes—thence he started for Diamond Lake, but soon got lost, and Nelson is ready to swear, that he, that evening, sounded every "sloo" in the vicinity.

In the morning he found himself on the bank of a creek—the outlet of Eagle Lake and but about 40 rods from the house of Oscar Erickson, in which were four families, and the house surrounded by Indians.

It was here that Mr. and Mrs. Foot, Erickson, Swanson and Carlson defended themselves until the Indians raised the siege, after killing Carlson.

Nelson made a direct shoot for Diamond Lake, reaching there about 7 A. M.—proceeding to the farm of J. H. Gates, where he found a number of Diamond Lake people who were preparing breakfast, but in consequence of the close proximity of the Indians, they started for Forest City without stopping to eat.

Nelson lost his boots on the road and his feet became so sore that he was compelled to ride part of the way—From Forest City he went to Kingston,

where his feet were dressed up with rags, and moccasins by Mr. Davidson, the miller. On his return to Forest City, Swan Munson gave him one of his horses to ride and when almost half way back, met Atkinson with his squad, who ordered him to halt and sought to levy on his horse—Nelson responded that he could not have the horse unless he took him dead or alive—A. said "come along" and Nelson joined the crowd and was subsequently out on every detail till the company was disbanded—at one time in Foot Lake region, Nelson lay by the side of a log in the dark, with the Indians passing on the side of it in the road.

He lost all trace of Swanson and family, and did not see them again until he met them in St. Paul where they now reside.

He did not, of course, succeed in getting any of the cattle.

Swanson and family were in the house with Foot and Erickson, and was several times lost on the prairie in getting to Paynesville with his family.

We have said there were four families in Erickson's house—they were Erickson's, Foot's, Swanson and Carlson.

When the Indians first came to Erickson's they asked for provisions, and young Carlson went with them into the potatoe patch to dig the pota-

toes—it was here that young Carlson was shot, and when found he was dead, with the hoe in one hand and a couple of potatoes in the other.

While defending themselves in the house, Foot was shot through the breast and Erickson through the bowels—Foot killed an Indian after he was shot, standing on his knees.

The defence of Mr. and Mrs. Foot was so heroic that the Indians raised the siege and left. Subsequently Mrs. Foot came to Forest City and reported her husband in a dying condition, but strange to say, Foot was, two days later, brought into Forest City on a load of goods, where he was kindly cared for for a couple of days and sent to St. Cloud.

Foot and Erickson still live.

Our fellow townsman N. A. Viren and family, were in close proximity to these tragical scenes—his legs and his oxen did him good service. Falling behind the crowd in consequence of the loss of an ox, he besought his company to wait for him a little while, which they refused to do—when he overtook them, they were all stuck fast in the mud in the outlet of the lake just East of Master's place.

Viren sounded the bank of the lake and finding hard bottom he drove into the lake and around the

SLOO, and started ahead—the company called him to come to their assistance and haul them out, but he politely informed them that what “was sauce for goose was sauce for gander” and passed on and arrived at Forest City a day or two in advance of his company, who in consequence of the delay lost most of their cattle and goods, and two of their company, Lawrenson and Backland who were killed and mutilated.

Viren “still lives,” a portly well fed gentleman, and Nelson says that while he repented of all his sins by the side of that log—he gave no preference to any particular sin !! and has no desire to live that week over again.

## CHAPTER VI.

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On the 24th of August Capt. Strout was ordered to Forest City via Glencoe and Hutchinson but deeming Forest City the safest place, from his stand point, came up the Mississippi direct to the latter place, arriving on the eve. of the 27th, and went into camp near the law office of Judge Smith.

From a casual conversation, Capt. Strout remarked that he was authorized to make a stand where he could do the most good and should stay at Forest City a week or ten days, if deemed necessary. On being informed during the evening that all the Indians then in the country were probably at Swede Grove about ten miles out, the Captain very suddenly came to the conclusion that Glencoe was a safer place for him, and therefore decamped at sun rise next morning for the latter

place, 44 miles south-east, and where no Indians had, at that time, been seen.

On this fact being reported to head quarters, Capt. Stront was immediately ordered to return to Forest City via Acton, which he attempted to do, and arrived and camped in Jones' door yard in Acton on the eve. of September 2d, surrounded by timber and as was afterwards found out to his sorrow, two hundred and fifty Indians camped within two miles of him.

Learning of Capt. Strout's movements by the arrival of a scout from Hutchinson (Thos. Chambers, Esq.,) and knowing that, at this particular time, a large force of Indians had suddenly appeared at Swede Grove, it was deemed advisable to intercept Strout, and divert his command to Forest City without going to Acton, and as this was deemed a pretty hazardous undertaking a volunteer detail was invited, when J. V. Branham jr., Albert Sperry and Thomas Holmes immediately seated themselves in the saddle and just before sun set on the eve of the 2nd of September they started south through Rice City with the view of heading Capt. Strout on the Hutchinson and Acton road and inform him of the nest of hornets he was unconsciously running his men into.

The route of Capt. Strout was principally on

the old Pembina and Henderson Indian trail, and on the arrival of our men at that point, sufficient signs were discovered to satisfy them that Strout had already passed, and the boys had nothing to do but follow up the trail, and they did so, and found Strout as above related, in Jones' door yard, in one of the most dangerous positions that could possibly be taken, particularly with 250 savages in Swede Grove, two or three miles off, and no pickets set.

The balance of the story we give in the language of one of the three scouts.

About four miles out from Forest City they saw coming toward them a party of five mounted men and not being able to tell whether they were friends or foes they halted—one of the boys says: 'well what do you think?' That looks blue, boys, but we won't run from five Indians anyhow—the five halted—we advanced a few steps and we halted—then the five advanced, and to our joy we discovered John S. Shields and four others returning from Rice City, where they had been looking after crops and not aware of the close proximity of Indians.

Feeling greatly relieved we bade the boys good-by, after fully posting them up in regard to the operations of the Indians.

On our way to Acton we passed across the prairie East of Round Lake and West of Minne-belle, with darkness well settled upon us. We necessarily avoided all the groves of timber, not knowing what minute we would be sent to our long home by a friendly missile from the gun of the red gentlemen.

On they went until reaching the old Red River and Henderson trail (so called), when they commenced to search for the tracks of Capt. Strout and his company—of which they found no evidence until reaching the outlet of the lake near Evenson's when they halted and got down on their knees (for once in their lives) to look for tracks. Here they discovered tracks sufficient to fully satisfy them that Strout's company had passed as above related on their way to Acton. On they go, in darkness doubly dark, with nothing to change the midnight silence until they reached the edge of the timber and the cabin where, on the 17th ult., poor Jones and the Baker family met their fate without a moment's notice.

On reaching the timber the darkness, which was total before, became a great deal more so, and only for our faithful horses the party would have been unable to keep the road, and right here two

dogs sprang out with a howl that would have startled men in ordinary times—but at that time and under the circumstances narrated, hair had to be well rooted to hang to the scalp.

After a silent ride of half a mile to where Strout was camped, with thoughts flitting from the loved ones in Minneapolis, to the anticipated danger that hovered over us, we came close up to the tents—but what do they contain? Friend or foe?—no picket cried “halt!”

So we says “Tom. let us halt and sing out to them.”

Says Tom. “agreed.” So we sang out “Who’s there? Friend come up.” When we halted we could have struck the tents with a stone, and no picket interposed.

People may say what they please, but if there is any period in man’s existence, in which the heart will voluntarily and uncalled for, go up to God in thankfulness for a safe deliverance, it will be under circumstances in which that little band of three had been placed between sundown and midnight during the travel of twenty miles.

## CHAPTER VII.

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### HOW THE BOYS GOT OUT OF ACTON.

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When Captain Strout was informed that a party of Indians were camped about three miles off there was considerable excitement among the boys, —but few slept that night. The old condemned Belgian guns furnished Captain Strout's men by Uncle Sam to scare the red men with, and which most of the men thought they would have no use for, were quickly examined, and it was found that only about one in five had ammunition that would fit, and the boys were kept busy till daylight preparing ammunition that might soon be needed.

By the time it was fairly daylight, breakfast was called, and while they were yet eating, they heard the firing of guns about two miles off, and knowing that they were the only white men near-

er than Forest City or Hutchinson, it was no hard matter to guess where the firing came from.

On such an invitation it is needless to say breakfast was cut short off, and all made ready for a march.

Strout had but five mounted men and these were ordered to advance and keep a half a mile in advance of the company and teams. Albert Sperry one of the five was to keep about two hundred yards in advance of the other four.

The mounted men had proceeded about two miles in a southerly direction, when they discovered the bright barrels of guns glistening on a hill about a mile ahead, and on the farm pre-empted by the widow Baker just opposite Kelley's Bluff. Our men continued to advance until within a quarter of a mile when they halted, and sent word back to Captain Strout that the Indians were just ahead and to prepare for a fight.

As soon as the company came up the men were formed in open line and ordered to advance, which they did until they came within about two hundred yards of where the Indians had been seen, when the Indians opened fire on the company, which the company promptly returned.

About the third volley, private Getchell fell mortally wounded by a ball through the head. About

this time a party of mounted Indians were discovered approaching us in the rear, on the road we had just traveled, and as they came down over the rolling prairie single file with horses and ponies at full speed, whooping and yelling as only wild Indians can, it made a picture long to be remembered by those who saw it.

Instantly the second Lieutenant was ordered back with twenty men to protect the rear of the train.

Fearing to make a charge most of the mounted Indians rode around and formed on the right of the company, and a lake being on the left, Strout with his little band of sixty three men were completely surrounded.

After fighting some time, without any particular damage to either party, reminding the commander of what the Frenchman said of some of the first great battles of the rebellion, where nobody was killed on either side, "that it was one very civil war" but fearing Mr. Sioux Indians would soon receive reinforcements from another band known to be less than five miles off, the captain ordered a charge in the direction of Hutchinson with fixed bayonets.

This order was immediately obeyed under the lead of Lieutenant Clarke, every man came up to

the scratch like old veterans. So says the official report.

This was probably the bravest act of the day—when we take into consideration that Captain Strout's company was mostly made up of business and commercial men and dapper-fingered clerks from Minneapolis and St. Paul, many of them hardly knowing enough about fire arms to load their own pieces, but the red men on the south did not like close quarters, and scattered in all directions, and for a time it seemed as though the little unpleasantness had ceased, and the teamsters thinking the road clear, started their teams on the run for Hutchinson, leaving all the company that were not fortunate enough to climb behind, and the boys thinking it would be a poor show for broken-legged men, all hands started pell-mell after the teams, and for a short time it seemed as though it was a "Bull Run" on a small scale, and that, too, after they had beat the red man on a bayonet charge.

The men did not want it understood that they were running away from the Indians, at all, at all, but when they made the bayonet charge they came very near not stopping till they got to Hutchinson, which reminds us again of an incident at "Bull Run," when one of the boys of a Vermont

Regiment was ordered to retreat; he obeyed orders and (no counter order being received,) he kept on retreating until he reached the north Derby line and only halted then, in order that he might not do violence to international law.

The Captain and his few mounted men soon brought the boys to a halt, and order was restored in less time than it usually took McClellan to re-organize the army of the Potomac.

The Indians seeing the Company on the run, put after them in full uniform, that is to say, they divested themselves of all that makes the man, to-wit, "good clothing."

Many of them when first seen, had on black cloth suits and "biled" shirts.

Before proceeding any further in the description of the "days doings," we wish to mention one bright and noble oasis in the catalogue of Indian character usually made up of ambush and treachery.

While the skirmish was hottest and just before the charge was made, one of the Indians, supposed to have been LITTLE CROW, deliberately stepped upon the top of a fence, about one hundred and fifty yards in front of the Company, and waving his blanket, gave some orders to the Indians in our rear.

As soon as he mounted the fence Captain

Strout asked for some good marksman to take him off. Two or three of his boys tried and all missed him, when the whole Company was ordered to fire at him, but it seems to have been fore-ordered that he was not to die on that fence, for he stood the torrent of, and received the whole volley of sixty-three old Belgian bullets unscathed, whereupon Mr. Indian coolly stepped down from the fence, made a graceful bow, with a waive of the hand, as much as to say "thank you gentlemen."

The whole affair was so bold and graceful that our men could hardly refrain from giving the old red-skin three rousing cheers.

About this time order was restored among the men, private Jesse V. Branham Jr., one of the three volunteer scouts from Forest City the night before, having stopped to load his gun, was shot from behind, the ball passing through his left lung. Fortunately he did not fall, but had strength enough to walk until he overtook the teams. He was supposed to be mortally wounded, but on the contrary he is now on his pegs and in fact healthy, residing at Litchfield. From this time a running fight was kept up for about seven miles, during which time Stone of Minneapolis and another private whose name we do not now recollect, were killed, and about one third of the entire company wounded.

When the company halted at Cedar Mills for water and a little rest for the wounded, they found they had lost three men killed and left on the ground.

The remains were afterward buried by the 3d Regiment boys.

There were eighteen wounded, Captain Strout in his official report says: "The loss of the company in this encounter was three men killed and fifteen wounded, some of them severely, all were, however, brought from the field."

The reader will notice a material discrepancy in regard to the dead. That the 3d Regiment boys did not bury them, or Strout did not take them with him, requires no proof.

Captain Strout continues, "in addition to this, they lost most of their rations, cooking utensils, tents, and a portion of their ammunition and arms. Some of their horses became unmanageable and ran away. Some were abandoned, making with those killed by the enemy, an aggregate loss of nine. The loss inflicted on the enemy could not be determined with any degree of certainty, but Captain Strout was of the opinion that their killed and wounded was two or three times as great as ours,"—doubtful.

About one half the savages were mounted, partly

on large fine horses, plundered from the settlements, and partly on Indian ponies. The latter were so well trained, that their riders would drive them at a rapid rate to within any desirable distance, when both pony and rider would instantly lie down in the tall grass and thus conceal themselves from the sharp-shooters of the Company, (of which there must have been many, judging from the effect of the volley fired at the Indian on the fence.)

The Indians engaged in the skirmish were estimated at about one hundred and fifty to two hundred.

From Mr. Cross of Cedar Lake our men procured lint for the wounded, and proceeded on their way to Hutchinson, arriving at that point Wednesday afternoon.

Mr. Cross was killed by the Indians a few days after, as heretofore related.

On arriving at Hutchinson, the wounded were placed in the Sumner House, where they received all the kind attention from both men and women of Hutchinson that could be asked or desired, for all of which the boys united in a "God bless them with long life and plenty of this world's goods to make them happy both here and hereafter."

We have given a somewhat detailed account

of the Acton conflict, as it was the only one that took place in the County deserving the name of a battle.

Our report is made up partly from the official report of Captain Strout, but principally, and more reliably from the vivid recollection of Jesse V. Branham, Jr. Esq. one of the Forest City scouts sent out to head off Strout, and who was with him the day of the battle and supposed to have been mortally wounded by an Indian bullet. Strout's official report was a mixture of truth and folly, inconsistent with a just regard for the character of his soldiers, who cheerfully volunteered to take the field under all the adverse circumstances attendant on a hasty collection of men from work shops and the counter, totally ignorant of the art of war, and unused to the discipline of a military camp.

Strout himself was as little qualified for the post he occupied, as were any of the men for the practice of war.

His pusillamious course when he first entered on Indian Territory, marked him as an ill-qualified and unsafe leader.

Alluding to the different onsets of the Indians during the day, Strout says in his official report,

"on none of these occasions, however, did a single man falter or attempt a flight."

Branham says the teamsters ran with their teams and the men ran "pell-mell to keep up" and when Strout adds, in his report, that he had lost, during the battle, most of their rations, cooking utensils, tents, ammunition and arms, and nine or ten horses, it certainly looks as though Branham had the TRUTH on his side.

The fault was with the Captain, not the men.

It pains us deeply to feel compelled, in the light of historical truth, to speak of Capt. Strout as we do, well remembering the old adage, that to avoid speaking ill of those of whom we have but little reason to speak well, is the temperance of aversion, and seldom found in ordinary minds.

## CHAPTER VIII.

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On the 24th, of August, orders were issued to Col. B. F. Smith, commandant at Fort Snelling, directing him to arm and equip the company of troops under command of Captain Strout then of the 10th Regiment, and detail them to proceed "to Forest City and such other places in the vicinity as expediency might require, for the purpose of protecting and assuring the inhabitants of that region." As heretofore narrated in Chap. VI, p. 64, Strout arrived at Forest City on the eve of the 27th of August, and went into camp near the residence of Judge Smith, and stated that he could remain there if necessary till further orders.

He was reliably informed that all the Indians then known to be on the frontier were at Swede Grove about ten miles west of Forest City.

On the 3d of September the stockade was built by the citizens then in Forest City—about 120 feet square, by planting a double row of logs on end, three feet in the ground and about ten feet high, with bastions—it was built and finished up in less than 24 hours and I venture to say on the quickest time that any such edifice was ever erected in the United States—and well that we did so—for we were treated to a ceremonious call at 3 o'clock on the morning of the 4th by about two hundred and fifty Savages.

Our hasty uncarpeted accommodations took the red devils by surprise. They had not previously discovered our accommodations, and at once gave up the idea of assailing us in quarters, and confined their operations to a little promiscuous, careless shooting of old guns, and stealing horses, which unfortunately we had not secured within the stockade prior to their polite arrival.

Some ten or twelve Indians lost their lives here that morning in consequence of the inexperience, and un-soldier-like careless shooting by our boys.

The boys all meant well but they didn't know any better, and notwithstanding the assertion of dapper-fingered historians to the contrary, the Indians falsified said history by carrying their dead from the field of carnage before day. Only one white man was seriously wounded.

● A gentleman from Canada had arrived at For-

est City but a day or two before and was sleeping in the back of Mr. Hoyt's house and awoke just in time to see the Indians firing the front end of the house, and had the good luck to slip out at a back window and secrete himself in a corn patch in the garden, and while in this interesting position saw five dead Indians piled into a double wagon by the side of the burning house.

The next morning, at the request of this gentleman, we gave him a letter to Gov. Ramsey which enabled him to get out of Minnesota, and have not seen him since, but we have heard that he is not a believer in "going west."

The celebrated "crazy" Irishman came strolling into town some days prior to the attack, as a spy for the Indians, and had he been allowed to return to his employers, the attack would probably have been more successfully made some days earlier.

Not being able to pronounce the word "Shibboleth" he was placed in 'durance vile' and ultimately shipped under guard to Monticello—thence to St. Paul where he was magnified into a harmless martyr by the moccasin aristocracy of the Saintly City and thence was allowed to depart to parts unknown.

This was the same "crazy" Irishman described by Mrs. Baker, and who passed Howard Baker's

house just after the Indians, and who robbed the dead body of Baker of 50 to 70 dollars in gold.

Six dwelling houses and one barn were burned at Forest City on the morning of the 4th, of September, viz: of Wm. Richardson, Milton Gorton, James P. Howlett. Dudley Taylor, A. B. Hoyt, William Richards and A. C. Smith.

Mrs. T. C. Jewett, Mrs. Whitcomb and Mrs. Brown were the only ladies that remained at Forest City the entire period of these exciting times.

There were 12 persons killed in Meeker County and 12 in Monongalia the names of which were, in Meeker, Robinson Jones, Ann Baker, Viranus Webster, Clara D. Wilson, Philip Deck, Joseph Page, Linus Howe, Wilmot Maybee, Nels Olsen, Caleb Sanborn and Cross, and in July 1863 James McGannon. In Monongalia three Olsen's, father and two sons, Anderson and son, Carl Carlson and son, Mr. Backland, Mr. Lawrenson and the Lumberg family, and nine in McLeod County, contiguous to Meeker, viz: Mr. Spondy, wife and two children, one child of John Adams (taking John Adams prisoner) and four of the White family at Lake Addie. Mr. Adams was taken prisoner Sept. 4th.

Total killed in Meeker and vicinity, thirty-three, and probably some who have never been reported.

July 1st, 1863 McGannon was shot between Kingston and Fair Haven, probably by Little Crow in person, as this distinguished chieftain was a few days after shot by Mr. Lamson on section 30 Town 118—29 (Collinwood) Meeker County, and was found in possession of McGannon's coat.

The section on which he was killed is indicated on the map accompanying this book.

The great native warrior, together with his son—  
young Crow, were quietly making a dinner of raspberries, when the Irishman's bullet called him to his final account.

Little Crow and son were dining together—and Lamson and son were out hunting together—the hunters came suddenly in sight of the Indians and seeing them first, quickly resolved that white man must scoop Indian, or Indian would scoop white man, and suiting the action to the word, and being a good shot, Lamson scooped Crow—while his son aimed at young Crow, missing him, but disabling his gun—whereupon young Crow fled and left the country—subsequently followed the trail of Gen. Sibley's army across the plains, as we were informed, and finally ran into Gen. Sibley's camp in pretty much the condition of Lee's army when he ran in into Gen.

Grant's camp—to get something to eat!

Little Crow was buried at Hutchinson without much ceremony, and without full knowledge at that time that it was in fact Little Crow.

Little Crow was a small sized man and a savage chieftain of singular power and genius, always evil disposed to the whites, as was his father 30 or 40 years before. With strong intellect and an unbending will, but had become disgusted with the management of the war by the other chieftains of the hostile tribes.

We have not heard of any new speculations in regard to Little Crow's remains for some years.

The last we heard of them some live Yankee near Hutchinson had his bones in an old soap-box, and was trying to drive a sharp bargain by selling them to the Minnesota Historical Society—with what success we never learned—alas for human—or rather inhuman fame and greatness. Report has it, that said Society is in possession of Little Crow's scalp (we doubt whether he was ever scalped) which had been carefully tanned and consequently will not decay—so that future generations can look on the polished top knot with a due amount of reverence.

So far as the fact is concerned, it is of little consequence whether the tanned scalp now in the

archives of the State Historical Society ever covered Little Crow's pate or not, if after generations only think so, it is just as well, and the man who scalped Christopher Columbus, and could not find where John Rogers was burned Feb. 14th, 1554, will be dead long before the fraud will be discovered, and as there is no prospect of his leaving any male heirs, posterity will not be likely to trouble itself about the fact. Another report has it, that one J. D. Farmer, of Spring Valley, Minn. became possessor of Little Crow's skull soon after his death and presented it to Dr. Powell of Lanesboro, and that one Dr. Twitchell of Chatfield has the balance of Little Crow's "frame work,"—doubtful.

## CHAPTER IX.

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The morning of the 4th, of September 1862, was celebrated in Forest City by the early arrival of about 200 Indians. They were evidently unaware of the existence of our stockade and appearances indicated that they intended to take the people by surprise.

Coming into town at 3 A. M., some twenty or more mounted Indians advanced to about the center of the town-site and discharged a volley in the air—evidently intending to rouse the sleeping settlers, and during the panic, have things their own way. In this they were disappointed.

With what we knew of the Indians in the county, an attack had for some two days, been deemed a moral certainty and we were as well prepared for them as we could have been—Guided solely by

the light of the "volley in the air" some twenty of our men fired over the pickets of the stockade and five Indians "bit the dust" and were subsequently loaded into a wagon at Hoyt's house.

A picket guard surrounded the town, and most of them continued on the second beat, a list of the men standing guard that night has not been preserved but among them we find H. Stevens, Chauncy Dart, Andrew Nelson, Henry L. Smith Wm. Branham and Sylvester Stevens, with others.

The Indians forded the river on the west and came in between sentinels Smith and Dart, who were the first to give the alarm, by the discharge of their pieces—this was immediately passed round the town by the entire guard and all started for the stockade, the Indians in the mean time giving a grand war whoop and discharged a volley apparently in the air, as above stated.

The moon having just gone down, it was remarkably dark and sentinel Dart in taking a b — for the stockade, suddenly found himself in a "coal-pit hole" where he lost his hat and gun—being some-what in a hurry he had passed along a few rods, when the ludicrous in his composition got the better of his fears, and he went back and recovered his hat and gun.

Henry L. Smith in his b — passed his fathers

law office and brought up at the Hotel barn, where the mail boy was fruitlessly endeavoring to saddle and bridle his horse, preparatory to starting to Monticello with the mail.

Sentinel Smith assisted the boy in getting the horse properly equipped and started off, by which time diverse and sundry bullets, were reminding H. L. that no further delays were allowable.

The Indians finding a pretty formidable stockade did not attempt to enter it, but confined themselves to stealing such household goods as could be most easily carried off. Sixty horses were stolen that morning and four or five buildings ransacked and burned.

The mail carrier came back from Kingston about 7 o'clock A. M. in company with C. F. Davis, to ascertain the result of the attack.

A report of the nights doings was drawn up by A. C. Smith and signed by Whitcomb and sent that morning by mail to Gov. Ramsey.

A little before daylight two families came to the stockade, from the school house, where they had spent the night, viz: N. E. Tornbom, wife and four children—one of them Sophia—now the wife of John Lundberg (Sheriff of Stevens County) and Charles Magnus, wife and two children; also Mrs. (Hodgeson,) mother of Ole (Hodgeson.)

The school house had been the nucleus for a band of the Indians, but not anticipating that any one was in the house, its occupants remained unmolested for nearly two hours.

In the stockade that morning there were some 40 men armed with Springfield muskets and about 200 old men, women and children—most of them unable to get out of the country.

General Isaac Fletcher of Lyndon—late a member of Congress from Vermont, once boasted on the floor of the House of Representatives at Washington that “no hostile flag ever entered on the soil of Vermont and returned to its original abode”.

We don't claim that the Sioux Indians entered Meeker County with a hostile flag—but we had a very good one at the top of our liberty pole, which entirely escaped our memory that night and the Indians took it down and ran off with it.

After day light some Indians were in the act of driving off cattle when Sergeant Wm. Branham, called for a squad of men to go out and head them off—six went out—three in a squad—the foremost consisting of Wm. Branham, H. L. Smith and Aslog Olson; the cattle were saved, but Olson was shot through the breast, Branham in the arm, while Smith remained unharmed. The rear

squad countermarched to the stockade without waiting for orders, the wounded men recovered.

Lieut. Atkinson was on his way from Clearwater with supplies, and was two or three miles out, when he learned of the attack and in the exercise of a sound discretion, concluded to start a new hotel in the bushes, and dumped his provisions and supplies and himself into the biggest grove of hazel brush and prickly-ash to be found. He subsequently changed his mind and returned to Forest City.

The Indians retired from Forest City about five o'clock in the morning, dividing into three parties. The first took the Manannah road—the second due south on the Greenleaf road and the third the Rice City road—simultaneously firing the residences of Dudley Taylor, Milton Gorton and Wm. Richardson, situated each about a mile from town, one house on each road.

We have since been told, that at the Indian trials at Mankato, the chiefs admitted a loss of eleven at Forest City. We cannot vouch for its truth. From what was seen, and from examinations subsequently made we guarantee that seven were killed—how or where the other four lost their breathing apparatus, is more than we can tell.

About ten o'clock on the morning of the 4th,

and about five hours after the disappearance of the Indians. Capt. Nelson and Lieut. J. B. Blanchard with Thomas Dunham, Henry Bradford, Fred Hilter Elder Brooks and some 20 others came in from Manannah, where it appears they were encamped the night before. They were from Monticello, Wright County and came by way of St. Cloud and Paynesville to Manannah.

Whether the object of their mission was for more than a tour of inspection is unknown. They made no stop at Forest City, and rendered us no service.

Apprehensive of a renewal of the attack on the night of the 5th, or 6th, there was no sleep to the eye or slumber to the eyelid for the two succeeding nights, by those in Forest City, but no further demonstration was made by the Indians.

On the 9th, of September Maj. Welch with about 300 men—a portion of the 3rd. Regiment passed thorough Forest City on their way to the Minnesota River, remaining at Forest City but one night,

Capt. Petitt's company B. 8th Regiment hastily organized at Faribault, Rice County, arrived at Forest City, went into quarters there on the 15th, of September and was the first military organization sent to our assistance—twenty-nine days after

the massacre at Acton, and after the main body of the Indians had returned to the vicinity of the Minnesota River..

Forest City had thus presented the only successful barrier to the passage of the Indians to Kingston—Fairhaven and Clearwater on the Mississippi River.

The Indians showed no disposition to pass and leave in their rear the post at Forest City, unless they could first wipe it out of existence or take its possession from the whites.

Capt. J. C. Whitney's Company C, 6th Regiment arrived at Forest City, Nov. 22nd, 1862, and went into winter quarters in the stockade while Capt. Petit's company occupied the hotel.

Capt. Whitney's company was ordered to Fort Snelling, Feb. 26th 1863, and again Sep. 25th '63 he returned to Kingston—remaining about one month, when his command went across the plains to the Missouri River, as an escort to a supply train—returned to Kingston Jan. 5th 1864, and thence for the south the following June.

On the 27th of Feb. the day after Capt. Whitney left for Fort Snelling—Capt. O. C. Meriman arrived with Company B, 6th, Regiment and remained till the 26th, of April following.

On the 24th, two days prior to the departure of

Merimain's company, Lieut. Clark Keysor arrived with 21 privates and 4 non-commissioned officers of Capt. Dane's company E 9th, Regiment and occupied the stockade. Capt. Wilson's company of cavalry passed Forest City on the 8th, of May '63, for Fort Ridgely.

On the 9th, of June Little Crow and son crossed the Forest City and Clearwater turnpike, about four miles out from Forest City, with two horses stolen at Silver Creek in the county of Wright.

Lieut. Keysor being apprised of the fact, took eight men and went out on the Clearwater road with the view of following their trail, but returned next morning without success, having been in the woods all night and passed the places where Little Crow and son had eaten both dinner and supper.

Little Crow and son forded the river three or four miles above Forest City early on the morning of the 10th, and passed on west—the trail could be easily followed.

Knowing that two Indians were in the woods west of Forest City and that they would necessarily cross the river at or near the old fords, Thos Grayson, H. L. Smith, Jas. M. Harvey and Robert Holmes, volunteered to watch two fording places

on the river between Forest City and Manannah on the night of the 9th,—but for some purpose unknown these parties went to Manannah and spent the night, on returning found the fresh trail as above stated, and at the same time appeared Capt. John Cady and five of his men en-route for Paynesville.

Cady selected two of his men and took the trail and finally overtook the Indians on the 11th, on the bank of Lake "Arthur" in Kandiyohi county, when a skirmish immediately took place in which Capt Cady was shot through the breast and killed, the balance of the party returned, bringing the remains of Cady to Forest City, where they were properly cared for and forwarded to his friends in Anoka.

July 8th, Capt. Dane appeared and removed his men to the west bank of Long Lake near Kelly's bluff—the company went South in September.

One or two companies occupied Kingston in the winter of 1862-3 and a detachment under Lieut. O'Brien, was the last military organization stationed at Forest City.

After the arrival of Capt. Pettitt's company, the Forest City boys devoted most of their time in caring for personal property—stock, grain, &c., in different parts of the county and in which they

did good service. The company was disbanded by Gov. Ramsey on the 15th of October, 1862.

While in active service and until disbanded, the Government recognized and paid the officers and men.

After the arrival of regular troops, many of our men, knowing our organization to be a mere rope of sand, proposed to, and did go about their business, endeavoring to get ready for winter—get their families back—most of them had families which had been broken up, all of which seemed a very important duty.

On the 6th, Whitcomb met the writer in St. Paul and informed him that he and a portion of his command had "nominated a candidate for the Legislature," the knowledge of which coming to the ears of Gov Ramsey, he promptly ordered the company to be disbanded.

This proceeding deeply offended our doughty captain, who, on his return, took the orderly's book and marked the word "deserted" against the names of all his men, who were engaged in looking after their own property.

Thirteen of the best men of the company were thus marked, why or wherefore is unknown, unless the captain drawing pay for his entire company neglected to pay the deserters, an easy way

to net about \$300.00. One of the last raids of the Indians in the county took place in August 1863. Jesse V. Branham, sen. Wm. Kruger, Charles Kruger and William Branham, one dog and two horses, visited the farm of Wm. Kruger, eight miles south of Forest City, for the purpose of harvesting wheat.

The first night out, the men slept in the house, the horses were picketed within a rod of the house and dog stood sentinel—Kruger said he could be trusted.

During the night a tremendous thunder storm rent the skies, and the dog deserted his post and returned to Forest City and two Indians ran off with the horses—the trail run a due west course passing Pipe Lake Station, when seventeen soldiers took the trail and followed it past the Kandiyohi Lakes, overhauling the Indians about twenty miles out—the horses were picketed and the red men fast asleep.

Thinking to have more fun with them than fighting—the soldiers surrounded the sleeping Indians before waking them up.

As soon as the Indians discovered their position they pitched in among the soldiers and came very near whipping the crowd and died game, and father Branham says, the soldiers scaped the

Indians and left their bodies on the prairie. Father Branham has a poor opinion of "dogs" as a picket guard, and still less of Indians as play-mates.

## CHAPTER X.

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### A WILD WOMAN'S HISTORY—THE SLAYER OF HUNDREDS OF BEARS AND WILD-CATS.

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HONESDALE, Pa., July 20th, 1876.—“There” said Sheriff Spencer, as he pushed open the ponderous door of one of the cells of the county jail in this place, “There is a woman with a history.”

On a low chair in a cell in the jail at Honesdale, Pa., July 20th, 1876, sat a most singular looking person. A round, wrinkled, sun-burned face, small head crowned with thick, shaggy gray hair, that fell down over and almost concealed the blackest and sharpest of eyes; a slender body clothed in scant and shabby female garb, and lower limbs encased in tattered trousers. This was the occupant of the cell—Lucy Ann Lobdell

NEE Slater, better known thereabouts as "the female hunter of Long Eddy."

About 45 years ago a family named Lobdell lived in Delaware county, N. Y., at what is now the village of Long Eddy on the Delaware river and Erie railway, then sparsely settled. Lumbering was the main business of the settlers of the vicinity. The Lobdells dwelt in a cabin in the woods where a daughter, the subject of our sketch, was born. From the time this child was old enough to walk she was a great favorite among the hardy woodchoppers and raftsmen. They often took her off to the logging camp and kept her there for days at a time, and she early became inured to the hardships of their life. The lumbermen in those days were all good hunters, and always carried their rifles with them. Before Lucy Ann was eight years old they had taught her the use of the rifle, and she soon became as good a shot as there was in the settlement. At the age of twelve she could outshoot any of the men, and handled the ax with the ease of an old chopper. Before she had reached the age of sixteen she had killed numerous deer, and an absence of two or three days alone in the woods was for her not an uncommon thing. She once killed a full sized panther, and the hide of the animal is now in the possession of an ex-sheriff of

Wayne Co. Pa. Notwithstanding her masculine tastes Lucy Ann's name, as a girl and woman, was free from reproach. The breath of slander never reached her, and she could have had her choice of a husband from the most exemplary young men in the vicinity. But she had no inclination to marry and she rejected all offers.

A raftsmen named Henry Slater came into the settlement about 1850. He formed the acquaintance of Lucy Ann and to the surprise of everybody, they were married. Slater proposed to Lucy Ann, and she told him that they would shoot at a mark with a rifle. If he beat her shots she would marry him, if not she would stay with her parents. The trial of skill took place and Slater was victorious.

Slater proved a worthless scape-grace and neglected and abused his wife. A year after they were married Mrs. Slater gave birth to a daughter. Before the child was two weeks old Slater deserted both child and wife, leaving them in destitute circumstances. Slater never returned, but was occasionally heard of in New York city, and on the Hudson river, a worthless, drunken, vagabond.

The sorrowing wife went back to her parents, and after two years spent in trying to get along and maintain herself respectably by doing woman's work, but with poor success, she laid aside

the apparel of her sex, donned men's clothing, and taking her rifle went into the woods to earn a living for herself and child.

For eight or ten long years she roamed the forests of Sullivan and Delaware counties, in New York, and Wayne and Pike in Pennsylvania, and spent two years in Meeker county Minnesota.

She had cabins in various places, and would visit the old home about once a year, and only appeared in the settlements and villages to sell her game and furs and to procure ammunition.

On one of her visits to her child when it was about four years old, her parents complained of having its care on their hands. She therefore took it away and placed it in the Delhi poor-house, and left her old stamping ground for New York and thence up the Hudson river—still in men's apparel—and, strange to say passed and repassed her husband on the Hudson River railroad without being recognized by him, her disguise was so complete.

From Albany she passed west over the Central New York, and finally turned up in Minnesota, and says she taught three singing schools on the way, to provide means of transportation.

She spent a short time in St. Paul, where she made but few acquaintances and among them was

an Edwin Gribbel, who had some dealings with her, but Edwin hadn't the remotest suspicion that she was a female, or he would perhaps have been less free with her. Gribble had reason to know that Lucy Ann was somewhat eccentric, not only on account of the wildness of her tastes, but in the way she dressed, her costume in the summer of 1856 having consisted of a pair of calico pants, a calico coat and a calico vest and hat. In this cool but rather odd suit of clothes, Lucy Ann hung around for some time waiting for a chance to make a strike. At this time Gribble occupied a claim on the upper shore of Lake Minnetonka, near Cook's and adjoining him was a claim which had been jumped by a man, who employed Lobdell to occupy it in his absence, and both of whom spent some time together upon that claim. The claim-jumper, however, finally disappeared, leaving Lobdell alone to watch his land. This was about the time that Gribble and Lucy got pretty thick, tramping together through the woods in pursuit of game, and sleeping together under the same blanket when they wooed the gentle goddess of slumber under the umbrageous forest trees around Minnetonka. But Gribble didn't dream that Lucy was a lone female, and hence he felt that his familiarity with her entitles him to a suspension

of public opinion until he can prove his innocence of any evil intention. Well, after hunting with Lucy for a while, and pleasing her with the eloquence of his tales of love, and his experiences as a jurist and politician, Lucy got tired of waiting for the return of the claim-jumper and also of Gribble's pretty talk, and expressed an inclination to strike out further into the wilderness. And right here, Gribble did a handsome stroke of business. The claimant of the land failing to appear, it naturally became the property of the occupant, and Gribble thereupon purchased Lucy's right to the soil, and gave her that seventy-five dollar rifle, which she carried for so many years afterwards in consideration of a quit-claim to the land, which she made out and transferred to Gribble. Then Lucy with Gribble's gun on her shoulder, set out for Meeker County.

She had the \$75 rifle, and spent her first winter (1856-7) with another person both in male attire, on the old Kandiyohi town-site on the north of Kandiyohi lakes.

The two were employed to reside on and thus hold possession of the new town-site, by the Minneapolis proprietors. Her companion spent the winter with her, but never for a moment suspected that he was wintering with a woman.

At times, when provisions fell short, they were compelled to live on squirrels for their meat.

And on one occasion, her companion was compelled to visit the Mississippi river settlements for supplies, and before his return, she, failing to find the necessary squirrel, relied upon those brought in by the cat, her only companion, for supplies—the cat furnished squirrels when the rifle could not reach them.

The last we heard of “puss” he was in the care of Noah White, of Kandiyohi county; he was a favorite in that settlement for a number of years and died of old age.

The Summer of '57 Lucy Ann appeared in Mannah, boarding a short time in a place, doing chores, chopping wood, hunting, washing dishes, etc., for her board. She was handy at anything; those with whom she was acquainted seemed to enjoy her company—her male apparel often requiring her to sleep in close proximity with others of the male gender—but with no indiscretion and with no suspicion that she was other than what appeared on the surface.

For the purpose of completing her disguise she had assumed the name of La-Roi Lobdell.

She ever seemed well pleased with her disguise, and the difficulty that would naturally interpose

in resuming, without loss of character, her natural and appropriate raiment probably induced her to continue the deception. She claimed to have assumed this disguise, originally in order to better get away from home, without detection by a drunken husband.

She had but little money and was a splendid hunter and was offensive to none, and, as before remarked, was good company and a "hale fellow well met" with all the young people in the neighborhood, committing no indiscretions.

In the summer of 1858, by accident, "Satan, with the aid of original sin," discovered and exposed her sex. The blue code of Connecticut was consulted, and the law was invoked to purge the community of the scandal.

The county attorney, Wm. Richards, now of the city of New York, filed an information against Mrs Slater before John Robson, Esq. J. P., then contesting the jurisdiction of this county with J. B. Atkinson, Esq., as judge of the only court we had, alleging "that, whereas, one Lobdell, being a woman, falsely personates a man, to the great scandal of the community, and against the peace and dignity of the State of Minnesota," and asked that she be dealt with according to law, that so pernicious an example might not be repeated in

this land of steady habits. U. S. Willie, Esq., a young lawyer from Virginia, then residing at Forest City, appeared for the prisoner, and A. C. Smith as counsel.

The plea of NOT GUILTY was interposed, and the legal evidence to prove the necessary fact could not easily be obtained, and was left in doubt, and the court, after taking the case under advisement, finally ruled that the right of females to "wear the pants" had been recognized from the time of Justinian, and that the doctrine was too well settled to be upset in the case at bar, and Mrs. Slater was therefore discharged.

This denouement had the effect to discredit her in the settlement, subjecting her to insult from the vicious on every hand. She became deranged pending the proceedings, and, as it were, an outcast in society—an object of commiseration and sympathy, and soon thereafter a public charge.

On recovering from the mental shock, she expressed a willingness to return to her family and friends, but had no means save her rifle, and nobody in the settlement able to purchase that.

Mrs. Slater was finally sent home at the expense of Meeker county, under the direction of Capt. A. D. Pierce, then of Manannah.

Soon thereafter Capt. Pierce received a letter from Mrs. Slater's parents, thanking him and the county most heartily for their kindness in returning her to her friends.

In 1859 she again appeared on her old stamping ground, "the basket," and still in male attire. We conclude this novel romance in the language of the *New York Times*:

She at times would recount her experiences in the forest, and asserted that in the eight years she had killed 150 deer, eleven bears, numerous wild-cats and foxes, besides trapping hundreds of mink and other fur bearing animals. She had hand-to-hand contests with both wounded deer and bear, as ugly seams and scars upon her body amply testified. For two or three years after her return she led a mendicant sort of life through the valley, and finally entered the poor-house at Delhi, to which she had sent her child several years previously. This child, however, had some time before been taken out of the institution by a farmer of Damascus township, Wayne county, Pennsylvania, named David Fortman, and given a home at his house.

In the spring of 1865 a young woman was let off an Erie railway passenger train at Basket station, or Long Eddy. She could not pay her fare any

further, and said she had no particular point to which she was going. She gave her name as Mrs. Wilson, and said she had been deserted by her husband at Jersey City, where she had been living for some months. He was an employe of the Erie railway company, and had eloped with the daughter of the lady with which they boarded. Mrs. Wilson said that she was the daughter of highly respectable parents, named Perry of Lynn, Mass., and that she had run away from home with, and married James Wilson, her parents having opposed the match. The station agent and others at Basket station kindly offered to make up a purse for the unfortunate woman, and send her back to her parents, but she declined the offer, saying she was ashamed to meet them, and did not wish them to know of her whereabouts. She was in feeble health, and fearing that she might become a burden on strangers, she went to Delhi, and entered the poor-house.

Lucy Ann Slater was still an inmate of the almshouse, and a singular attachment had sprang up between her and the new comer, Mrs. Wilson, probably owing to the similarity of cause which had forced them to become paupers. The following year both of them left the county house, and nothing was heard of either of them for two years.

In the summer of 1868 a party of fishermen discovered two strange persons living in a cave in Barrett township, Monroe county, Pa. They were a man and woman. Soon thereafter there appeared in one of the villages a tall, gaunt man, carrying a rifle and leading a half-grown bear cub by a string tied about his neck. The man was bare-headed and his clothing was torn and dirty. Accompanying him was a woman about twenty-five years old, shabbily dressed, but giving evidence of more intelligence than the man, who called himself Rev. Joseph Lobdell, and said that the woman was his wife. As they walked about, the man delivered noisy and meaningless "sermons," declaring that he was a prophet of the new dispensation, and that the bear had been sent him by the Lord to guard him in the wilderness. For two years these vagrants wandered about that portion of the country, living in caves, and subsisting on roots, berries, and game killed by the man. At last they were arrested and lodged in jail at Stroudsburg, where they were kept several weeks. While in jail the discovery was made that they were both women.

Subsequently the authorities learned that they belonged to Delaware county, N. Y., and thither they were sent. This pretended man and wife were Lucy Ann Slater and Mrs. Wilson, who

had been leading this vagabond life, for four years.

In the meantime Mary Ann Slater, the daughter of Lucy Ann, who had been taken from the Delhi almshouse in 1859 or 1860, had found an excellent home, and had grown up to be an intelligent and attractive young woman. A young man named Stone lived near by with his widowed mother, whom he supported. He loved Mary Ann, and being a worthy and promising youth, the foster father of the girl saw no reason to oppose a match between her and the widow's son. The widow, however, was so strongly set against her son marrying the young lady that the whole neighborhood wondered. A number of young men in the neighborhood were jealous of Stone, and one dark night they waylaid Mary Ann. The outrage drove her almost insane, but Stone's affection was undiminished. He still pressed his claim for her hand. At length when their marriage seemed certain, Mrs. Stone revealed a state of affairs which fully accounted for her opposition. She told her son that she was not a widow, and that Henry Slater was his father as well as the father of Mary Ann.

Lucy Ann Slater and Mrs. Wilson again left the Delhi poor house, and have ever since been living

in caves and cabins in the woods. The former is at times entirely deranged. All last winter they lived in a cave ten miles from Honesdale, but they divided their time between Monroe county and this. Lucy Ann wandered into this village the other day, and out of common decency she was arrested, and was placed in jail where we found her at the commencement of this chapter.

## CHAPTER XL.

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DR. FREDERICK NOAH RIPLEY.

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Dr. Ripley arrived at Shakopee, Scott county, Minn., in September 1853, and resided at that place, boarding at the "Warren House" during the years 1853-4.

He came from New York city, where he was educated, and where he left a mother and an intended wife.

In 1855, he first made his appearance in the small village of Minneapolis—a slightly built man, of refined and gentlemanly appearance; possessing copious stores of useful and instructive information; richly endowed with all the natural gifts of an enlarged mind and liberal understanding; full

of high hopes and vigorous promise, who in his early manhood had left the land of his birth to seek that of his adoption in the far west.

He had been induced to take this step by a college class-mate. at that time a practicing young lawyer in Minneapolis—the late Hon. D. M. Hanson.

Dr Ripley was a young and talented physician but recently graduated from a celebrated medical institution in the east, and was looking through the west for the purpose of selecting a home, where he could devote his entire time to the practice of his profession.

About this time that portion of our Territory now comprising Meeker and McLeod counties had just been explored by a few citizens of Minneapolis, and considerable excitement existed in the village, in regard to the favorable reports made by the pioneers in relation to their visit west of the Big-woods.

The doctor was strongly recommended to make a visit to the new-discovered region, to look up a claim and select a home, and in doing so made up his mind to settle—expecting to locate either at Forest City or on Cedar Lake, in the county of Meeker.

Arrangements were made to have the supplies

necessary for the ensuing winters use, stored at Forest City, at the same time the Dr. with one John McClelland now Register of Deeds in Becker county, were to remain on the claim at Cedar Lake, where they had established their camp for the winter.

Ripley and McClelland left camp for Forest City, for supplies on the first day of March 1856—a distance of 18 miles.

It was a delightful morning—the sun shone brightly and the snow was melting fast till 9, A. M. when a gentle breeze from the north-west started up—in a short time clouds began to appear and by 12 M. a full-grown BLIZZARD was upon them.

They traveled as near a north-west course as they could calculate, until dark when they stopped in a small popple grove; gathering a pile of dry sticks, with which they started a fire, they camped for the night—imagination will tell how they spent the night, without food or blankets, and the thermometer down to 20 below zero and the wind blowing a hurricane, their only occupation was to hunt wood and keep up the fire till morning when they again started out, as was supposed in a direct course for Forest City and traveled until about 9 o'clock A. M. through snow from one to three feet deep striking Crow River, but whether

above or below Forest City they could not tell, and after a search for several hours both up and down stream the Doctor became discouraged and both started to go back whence they came—this was about two P. M.—by this time the storm had abated and the sun came out just before night.

About dark they accidentally came to the place where they had camped the night before, but to their great disappointment the fire had gone out and their few remaining matches were found to be wet, they had no fire and as they started out without food, in anticipation of getting through to Forest City the same night, hunger and cold told on them terribly. The Dr. was badly chilled—both walked the grove for some time but concluded to strike out for camp as it was quite as easy to walk on the prairie as in the timber.

Ripley showed signs of fatigue and quite frequently wanted to stop and rest—McClelland insisted it would not do to stop as he would freeze and McClelland was already aware that his own feet were partially frozen.

Ripley was evidently freezing as at every step he seemed to get weaker and less able to proceed and finally fell down in the snow—McClelland helped him up and led him on for some distance, until Ripley said "Mc. go ahead and if the

teams have come into camp—have them come out after me.

McClelland very reluctantly left Ripley and made as rapid steps for camp as possible, knowing full well that he was taking a last farewell of the good man on earth.

McClelland left Ripley about half a mile from what is now called Lake Ripley.

The Dr. seems to have wandered back to the grove, where his remains were found in the April following by Mr. William S. Chapman (now of California.)

McClelland left Ripley about 8 o'clock A. M. of the third day out and seven miles from camp. McClelland had a hard days work and got into camp about sun down with his feet badly frozen, where he lay nineteen days! before the expected team arrived. Dr. Ripley was thirty-two years old.

When McClelland was discovered in camp, he was in a dreadful state of prostration, was immediately removed to Shakopee and both legs amputated above the knee.

Dr. Ripley was of pleasing address and gentlemanly manners, below the medium height, light hair, blue eyes and talented—and had he lived could not fail to have made a valnable citizen.

He belonged to the Masonic order—was an honor to the craft and was beloved by all who knew him.

His remains have not been, but should be removed to the cemetery at an early day.

Previous to Dr. Ripley's pitching his tent west of the woods in Meeker county, he had pre-empted the East half of the South-west quarter and South west quarter of the South-west quarter of section 30 and and Lots 7 and 8 of section 31-116-22. This pre-emption bears date October 18, 1855—the public sale taking place October 24th. 1855.

## CHAPTER XII.

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### CHURCH HISTORY—PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

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The first Presbyterian Church and society organized in the county was at Forest City by Rev. J. C. Whitney, who came to Forest City in the spring of 1858 and organized a Presbyterian society Sept. 25th, 1859 and styled "The trustees of the Westminster Presbyterian society of Forest City."

The first trustees were I. C. Delmater, Richard Pool, A. C. Smith, J. W. Griswold and A. W. Angier.

The only one of these men now remaining in the county is A. C. Smith.

In connection with this organization Rev. J. C. Whitney labored until the fall of 1862.

Lots for a church edifice were donated by the Town Company, and timber hauled on to the ground.

Subsequently, in the fall of 1862 these timbers were used in building the stockade for defence from the Indians.

The next organization was at Greenleaf in September or October 1866—Rev. J. C. Harding was located there as a missionary, November 1866, and preached his first sermon Nov. 25th, 1866.

Society organized Feb. 17th 1866, in connection with the St. Paul Presbytery.

The first Trustees were Henry Hill. Wm. H. Greenleaf, James Gilpatrick, Dana E. King and John Curry—name and style "The first Presbyterian Church of Greenleaf." Trustees elected Nov. 4th, 1868.

In July 1866, Dana E. King presented the society with lot 12, A. C. Smith with lot 11, and Judson A. Brink with lots 9 and 10 on being paid \$25.00.

This gave the society four lots on which a house was erected costing between \$1.500 and \$2.000—of this \$300 was furnished by the "church erection board."

Rev. Mr. Harding labored here till 1870.

In 1868 Rev'nds D. B. Jackson, W. C. Harding and J. H. Hunter were appointed by the St. Paul Presbytery, in session at St. Cloud in April of that year, to organize a church at Kingston.

Church organized May 28th, 1868—name and style of, "The first Presbyterian church of Kingston."

The Society never become a corporate body and did not erect any house of worship.

Rev. Mr. Jackson labored here until the spring of 1871.

The next and last Presbyterian church organized in the county to this date (1876) is at Litchfield.

This town was located in 1869 by the St. Paul & Pacific Rail Road Company—on the line of its road and near the geographical center of the county.

Rev. D. B. Jackson, preached the first sermon August 15th, 1869 in an unfinished 7 x 9 school house without either doors or windows.

The Church at Litchfield was organized Jan. 2nd, 1870, by a committee from St. Paul "Presbytery" consisting of Rev'nds D. C. Lyon, J. W. Farris and D. B. Jackson.

Church and Society organized under the statute March 10th, 1870—name and style, "First Presby-

terian Church and Society of Litchfield." The following were the original members of this church, viz:

Mr. Achille N. Grenier, Mrs. Eusebia N. Grenier, Miss Rachel Amelia Grenier, Miss Isabella Grenier, Mr. Henry Hill, Mrs. Mary L. Hill, Mr. Henry Wilson, Mrs. Martha Gordon and D. B. Jackson.

Of the above, at this writing (1876) A. N. Grenier, died in St. Paul—Mrs. Grenier is now residing in Paris, France—Miss Amelia married to Mr. Mathron, and resides in Marseilles, France.

Isabella is the wife of Dr. Geo. W. Weisel and resides at Grand Rapids Michigan, Henry Hill is residing in the Black Hills (so called) while Mrs. Hill resides at Granite Falls, Yellow Medicine County Minnesota—Henry Wilson died in Missouri, and Rev. D. B. Jackson resides in Black River Falls Wis.

All gone but one! Such are the changes of six years. What may it be during the next century?

July 25th, 1870 the St. Paul and Pacific Rail Road Company deeded the lots on which the edifice now stands, and the present building was erected during the years 1870-71—whole cost over \$4,000,—of this sum one thousand was donated by a lady in the East; five hundred by the

church erection board \$500 procured through the efforts of D. B. Jackson and two thousand by citizen subscriptions.

The bell for the church was obtained during 1872—the money being raised by an excursion to St. Paul. The party came near destruction, as the train was partially thrown from the track, and one coach badly demoralized:

An instrument of music was on the rear coach and most of the party were in that coach and thus providentially saved from what would otherwise have been a sad disaster.

The sofa was furnished as a present from James Campbell Esq. of Hartford Conn.

The names of the different clergymen officiating in this church to this time are Rev. D. B. Jackson, W. C. Harding, Prescot Fay, A. J. Buel, and John S. Sherrill.

Total present membership of the church 71, something over one-half still reside in the county.

#### PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

Rev. T. G. Crump commenced holding Episcopal services in the Masonic Hall in Litchfield in July 1870.

At the time of the morning service on Sunday the 5th, and 12th, days, of March 1871 notice was publicly given for a meeting of the male mem-

bers of the Protestant Episcopal Church and congregation to be held in the Masonic Hall in Litchfield Saturday evening the 18th day of March A. D. 1871.

Rev. T. G. Crump presided at such meeting and D. E. Potter was chosen secretary.

A permanent organization was had, the following persons were elected church wardens and vestry men.

J. C. Braden Sr. Warden, C. H. Strobeck Jr Warden.

Vestry—D. E. Potter, G. H. Chapman, H. G. Rising, J. M. Mitchell, B. O. Esping, W. S. Brill and J. M. Waldron

Rev. T. G. Crump, Rector.

Four of the seven first vestrymen are now gone from the county.

Present Wardens and Vestry, James C. Braden, Chas. H. Strobeck, Wardens.

N. A. Viren, S. H. Wood, P. Ekstrom, F. E. Bissel, W. S. Brill. S. A. Plumley, Vestry.

H. Stevens, Treas. J. H. Morris Sec.

The lots on which the Rectory now stands were the gift of Herman Trott Esq. Land Commissioner, and other parties connected with the St. Paul & Pacific Rail Road Company.

The lots on which the church edifice and parish

school house stand were the gift of J. C. Braden.

Mrs Ellen Auchmuty of New York gave \$4000. toward the erection of the church edifice and Mrs. E. D. Litchfield of London England gave \$2.000.

No other Episcopal church organization has ever been perfected in the county.

#### METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

Rev. John Robson preached the first sermon in Forest City, November 1856, (see page 34 of this book.)

Mr. Robson continued to preach in Forest City during the winter of 1856-7 and through the summer of 1857. In May 1857, Wm. Walker, organized a sunday school, Wait H. Dart Superintendent.

Rev. Thomas Harwood was the first preacher on the Forest City circuit, in 1857. Rev. S. F. Sterritt, of Monticello, Presiding Elder.

First Quarterly Meeting held at Kingston, October 10th, 1857.

Official members present, Rev. S. F. Sterritt, P. E. Thomas Harwood, P. E. and E. H. Whitney, L. E. and B. Lyford. Stewards, E. H. Whitney, John Robson W. H. Dart, R. M. Eastman, and B. Lyford.

J. W. Griswold Recording Steward.

Second Quarterly Meeting held at the house of

John Robson in Forest City Jan. 25th 1858.

Rev. C. C. Kidder supplied the Forest City circuit in 1858.

September 4th, of this year a legal organization was had, and a board of Trustees appointed consisting of Messrs John W. Griswold, John Robson, Wait H. Dart, E. H. Whitney and Rufus M. Eastman.

To be known and styled as a "Board of Trustees to hold in trust certain church property located in the Town of Forest City, county of Meeker and State of Minnesota."

Said organization was made a matter of record, in the Registry of Deeds in said county in Book B. of mortgages page 326.

1861-2 Rev. S. Chubbuck occupied the Forest City circuit.

Mr. Chubbuck was at Forest City at the time of the Indian outbreak and while his connection with conference forbade his uniting with our "irregular" volunteer guards—he nevertheless shouldered the musket and did as good service as any man in Meeker County, until the meeting of conference when duty required him to leave. In the hours of danger Mr. Chubbuck was one of the coolest calmest men we had—showing no fear in the discharge of duty—brave but not rash, a man

of few words, he was a model of a christian gentleman.

August 4th, 1862 a new Board of Trustees was appointed consisting of Messrs John W. Griswold, Wait H. Dart, E. H. Whitney, Henry Keech and Allen Green.

In 1863 Rev. F. Berlin preached at Forest City occasionally.

In 1864 Rev. Levi Gleason performed similar service.

In consequence of the Indian War, there was very little done by this church for two or three years and no reports of interest made.

Under date of 1864-5 the Methodist Episcopal record contains the following entry:

"Conference year 1864-5 Rev. M. S. Harriman walked the Clearwater circuit when it was large enough to kill a horse."

No records for 1865 except that the Clearwater circuit was divided and the Forest City circuit re-established.

In 1866 Rev. Jesse Smith and J. W. Stuntz supplied the circuit.

1867, Mr. Stuntz continued at Forest City.

1868, Rev. Mr. Fasig occupied the ground.

1869, Rev. Thadeus J. Woodworth was appointed to the Forest City circuit, then composed of

Forest City, Kingston, Silver Creek and Pleasant Lake. Quarterly meeting at Kingston Nov. 22nd.

1870, Mr. Woodworth continued in charge, Rev. Charles Griswold Presiding Elder. We find the following entry in the church record: "voted to re-release J. W. Griswold from, and appoint Judge Smith to the Board of Trustees of the Forest City church property—a board of Trustees was appointed to hold church property in Litchfield—Rev. Charles Griswold, lost the report.

The first Quarterly Meeting held at Litchfield, was Nov. 28th, 1869.

In 1870, the name of the circuit was changed to "Litchfield" and Rev. Mr. Fasig was left in charge.

1871-2 no records.

1873, Rev. Isaac H. Riddick was located at Litchfield, also for the years 1874-5.

1876, Rev. Samuel Wood was appointed to this station but soon resigned in consequence of bad health.

Present membership of the Methodist Episcopal church 62.

The church edifice at Litchfield cost \$3,000 of which \$500, was donated by the Remington's of Ilion, New York, and the lots donated by Smith D. King. The house was erected in 1873 under the supervision of Rev. Mr. Copp.

## CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

This church was organized in 1871 with a membership of 38 persons, by Elder L. Y. Bailey.

Trustees—Chauncy Butler, G. B. Lyon, V. H. Harris.

Membership in 1876, about 40.

Present officers Chauncy Butler, S. W. Leavett, V. H. Harris.

The names of the clergymen officiating in this church, Rev. L. Y. Bailey, F. Grant, John Ainsworth and J. McReynolds.

Sunday school number: 50 children.

This church owns two lots of ground and has a church edifice costing \$4,000—no debt.

Mr. Ovid Butler of Indianapolis Ind. contributed \$1,000 toward the erection of the house.

SWEDISH METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF  
LITCHFIELD.

was organized April 14th, 1874.

Trustees—Jonas Peterson, Lewis Johnson, Peter Hanson, Peter Palm and Lewis Swanson.

O. Gunderson Presiding Elder, Swedish District Minnesota.

Lewis Johnson, Secretary.

The church edifice for this church was built in 1874, and cost about \$2,000—paid for by the congregation.

## ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Was organized at Forest City, in the spring of 1866 by Rev. Father Minolf of St. Cloud.

The first sermon was preached in the spring of 1858 at the house of John Flynn by Rev. Father Whitcomb of St. Cloud—the second by the same person at the house of John Dougherty in the Town of Harvey.

A church edifice was erected in 1866, at Forest City, costing \$3,000—individuals of all denominations generously contributed to its erection—size 40 by 60 feet.

The lumber for this building was hauled over 40 miles by teams from Gilman's mills, beyond St. Cloud, by the members of the church.

Trustees in charge of the erection of the church: Patrick Casey, John Dougherty, Sen. Daniel Dougherty and M. J. Flynn. The society originally embraced about fifty families. Rev. Father John Byrnes officiated in this church from 1867 to 1870—Rev. Father Arthur Hurley, from 1870 to 1873—Rev. Father Cahill from 1873 to 1875 and Rev. Father McDermott since.

Three hundred families now worship at this church.

Present Trustees—Rev Father McDermott Prest.  
Patrick Casey, Treas. M. J. Flynn Sec.

This house is not now half large enough, to accommodate the congregation.

This completes the record of the different chuches of this county to 1876.

## CHAPTER XIII.

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### THE JUDICIARY.

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During the early period which our historical reminiscences extend, such a thing as a "Judiciary" or any necessity for law, was unheard of and unknown in the county.

No county was ever settled by a better set of boys, and none submitted to the hardships of a new country one hundred miles from civilization with better grace, and with less complaint than those who first opened up Meeker County, and redeemed her soil from savage rule.

No law was required, the intelligence of the settlers, their quietness and industry, and the necessity which every man was under, to attend to

his own business, left their thoughts free from law or necessity for law.

Like our Pilgrim fathers, when landing at Plymouth—they regarded the "Decalogue" as both "law and gospel," from the first discovery of the prairie till the spring of 1858.

The first thing the settlers were considered good for, was to be "taxed"—Law soon followed, and Blackstone & Kent could be found at any man's door, who was willing to pay for it, and it was a little remarkable that among the first cases tried, was one of "woman's right's," and which has been already sufficiently described in chapter ten of this book.

From the spring of 1858, we were blessed with three courts—one presided over by Smith & Evans, under the supervision of Thomas A. Hendricks, then commissioner of the General Land Office, one known as the District Court, presided over by Hon. E. O. Hamlin of St. Cloud, and thirdly, the one of all others, presided over by Judge Atkinson as J. P.

Early in the summer of 1859 Col. Allen now of the Merchants Hotel, St. Paul—not having much to do at that time, bethought him to make a business strike and came all the way from St. Anthony to Forest City to pre-empt a quarter section of

tamarack swamp somewhere in back of St. Anthony.

The Col. was able to furnish first class proofs of settlement and improvements, consisting of a "half acre broke"—a dwelling house 12 feet square, one story high made of logs, with double board floor (i.e. one board with a hole bored through it) a double pitch roof (i.e. one board on top of the house, with some tar rubbed on it) one door, (i.e. a place where you could crawl out or in) and one window with glass in it, (i.e. a hole between the logs and a broken junc-bottle placed therein.)

The proofs were excellent, but just here the witness seemed to be tender-toed about swearing to the (then) requisite 30 days residence prior to pre-emption.

The Col. was fully equal to the emergency and promptly produced witness No. 2, consisting of about two-thirds of a demijohn of Medicine, vulgarly termed "brandy," and as he was quite anxious to propitiate the judges, that the case might the more easily "slide through" and with the same patriotic motion that rail road men furnish free passes to cheap legislators, he made us a present of Demijohn and its unfinished contents.

It is needless to add that the proofs were deemed ample and complete, and the Col. returned to St.

Anthony the owner of a "tamarack swamp," and with a somewhat higher opinion of legal technicalities.

The Col. tells us that farm lately changed hands for thirty thousand dollars.

The testimony of witness No. 2, was carefully preserved and filed away in the store room, so as not to tempt "loungers to sudden attacks"—requiring the use of such remedies, and to be brought out only on "state occasions," or when visited by governors, judges, rail road presidents &c.

Had Thomas A. Hendricks been here at the time, he would probably—as in other cases—have required ALL the proofs to be sent up.

The first Term of our District Court was to have been held in the fall of 1858—Hon. E. O. Hamlin Judge 4th Judicial District, but the roads were so bad, the judge could not come to time, and on the appointed day, the legal wisdom of the county met in Judge Smith's back office—then used as a store room—to wit, Wm. Richards County Atty. (not then admitted to practice) T. C. Jewett Sheriff, and Smith & Willie then constituting the Bar Association.

Col. Allen's demijohn stood in an old candle-box under the table, when Esquire Richards per-

emptorilly directed the sheriff to open and adjourn the court, pursuant to law.

Jewett was inexperienced—never having done anything of the kind before asked Richards what he should say.

"Say after me, sir," says Richards.

"Proceed sir," says the Sheriff.

"Ere ye 'ere ye 'ere ye," says Co. Atty.

"Ere ye 'ere ye 'ere ye," says the sheriff,—*"The District Court for the County of Meeker is now open—all persons having any business in this court must appear and they shall be heard—God save the Queen,"* says the county attorney.

"D——d if I'll do it sir" says the sheriff. "this is a free country and you've got an old English form that won't work here.

At this point in the ceremony Richards looked at Willie, who had discovered the demijohn under the table—had exploded the cork and elevated "the substance of things hoped for," and obtained a goodly portion of "the evidence of things unseen," and had lowered the same to half mast—and at once with offended dignity, which none but those who knew Richards could appreciate—enquired of Willie what he was about.

"Oh! nothing," says Willie, in his usual style, and stroking his moistened mustache,—*"go on with*

your court, this is only the first informal call of the calender, and ceremony is entirely unnecessary"—again flourishing the demijohn, as a barber would cut a figure eight with his razor, and in its descent securing another liberal portion of the "evidence of things unseen."

It is needless to add, to those who knew Richards, that he left, in disgust, forgetting to adjourn the court and it is not quite certain that that court has ever been adjourned.

The first District Court held in Meeker county was in October 1857—Hon. E. O. Hamlin Judge, and was held in Judge Smiths office.

The bar consisting spiritually of Messrs Smith & Willie—Materially of Geo. B. Wrights old drawing board 3 feet by 7—and the first case tried was that of John Pfeifer vs Peter Steirne—and as the case was reported in HARPERS NEW MONTHLY for Nov. 1861, I give the substance of the report from that work.

"When Meeker County, Minnesota, was new before lawyers found their way out there, two Dutchmen, Pfeifer and Steirne (brothers-in-law), undertook to cheat Uncle Sam by pre-empting two claims with one cabin, each furnishing half the lumber, the cabin to stand on the line between the two claims. Before the claims were

pre-empted the brothers fell out. Steirne undertook to carry away his half of the lumber, when Pfeifer shot Steirne. Steirne complains of Pfeifer for an assault with intent to kill, and Pfeifer settles up by giving Steirne a chattel mortgage on two yoke of oxen (all the property either party had in the world except a wife and several children each.)

"When the mortgage came due Steirne takes the cattle and Pfeifer replevied them, on the ground that the mortgage was given to compound a felony and was void.

"Maturing the mortgage, two pettifoggers arrived at the county seat, one Smith, a frontier lawyer and a notorious wag, and Willie, a clever young lawyer from Western Virginia.

"Pfeifer having the actual possession of the oxen, delivers one yoke to Smith for his fee, and Steirne, having the cattle in expectancy, mortgaged one yoke to Willie also to secure his fee.

"The case was tried by His Honor, E. O. Hamlin, then on the bench of the Fourth District, at the October Term, 1859, at Forest City. Being but one spare room in town, the court adjourned to give the use of the room to the jury. About 11 P. M. jury sent for the Court and informed the judge that there was no possibility of an agreement. The judge thereupon instructed the sheriff

to take the jury to the tavern and give them a supper and then shut them up again with the case.

"At 4 o'clock A. M. the jury sent for the Court, and gave in a sealed verdict, and were discharged from further attendance on the Court, with the judge's thanks. When the court convened at 9 A. M. the verdict was opened, and read as follows:

"Jury find for plaintiff, three cents damages.

("Signed) GEO. S. SHOLES, Foreman."

Atkinson affirms that those supplies have not yet been paid for.

The following is a list of the Jurors in this case.

Geo. S. Sholes Sen. A. B. Hoyt, John C. Scribner Alexander Lee. T. R. Webb, Thos. Dougherty A. C. Maddox, Sam'l L. Getchell, Geo. W. Baird Edward Brown John Blackwell Charles Duffy.

At this term of court Wm. Richards Esq. county Attorney "nunc pro tunc", was admitted to practice as an attorney and counsellor, on his own motion, assuring the court that although an Englishman, he was nevertheless a man of good moral character, attached to the constitution and the principles of a Republican Government, and could prove it by all the boys in Jim's bar-room—and as material was somewhat scarce for lawyers west of the woods, trusted that his appli-

cation would be favorably considered. The Judge casting a longing eye over the paucity of the Bar, remarked "did you ever" and directed the clerk to "swear him in."

Thus much for the introductory history of the District Court.

Something is due to our "Supreme Court," presided over at times by Judges Butler, Ritchie, Geo. Frid, Robson, Griswold, Atkinson, Stevens, Walker, Campbell, Hutchins and a host of others. Jurisdiction depended somewhat on who got hold of the case first.

In 1859 a case came before Judge Ritchie of Acton. Mark Piper and Nathan Butler acted as attorneys.

Piper made a motion to "quash the summons" on the ground that the letters, s.s. were not attached to "The State of Minnesota Meeker County."

This was a poser for Butler and his argument therein was not the most lucid, but the motion was overruled and judgment entered for Plff for the value of one "Opossum supper" proved to have been unfortunately eaten on some former occasion in the early history of the county by the defendant.

Subsequently both attorneys enquired of us

what connection those magic letters had in the diagnosis of the case.

If we remember rightly we informed them that the s. s. stood for "simplicity simplified," referring to the "code" and that no case could be prosecuted without recognizing "the code" by the addition of the s. s.

The same summer we had a case before Hutchins, J. P. of Kingston, in which our old friend Fitzgerald appeared as both client and counsel against us, and moved to dismiss on the ground that the justice had never given a bond, and as the justice had quite forgotten whether he had or not, forbade any further proceedings.

Fitzgerald came into court with a club two feet long and size of a sled-stake—hence the sobriquet "Shillala Fitzgerald" which he carried ever after to the end of his days.

In 1862 Jewett sued Hoken Peterson for \$4.00 sheriff's fees in some former case. Hoken came to us to see what we would defend him for, and warrant the case, and after an hours parley, in which we commenced on \$3,000, secured on real estate, we finally struck off the three ciphers and closed a contract and sealed it at \$3.

Jewett found out, by some means how the case stood, and soon after meeting Hoken he offered to

settle and pay his own costs for \$2.75. Hoken having an eye to finance, promptly settled, and by not paying his lawyer anything, thereby saved 25 cents. Jewett would have found it a telling business had the suit been before any one else but "Jim" Atkinson, who always regarded the fee bill as the "chief end of law," and mulched Jewett about six dollars.

J. B. Atkinson, Esq. was chief justice of Meeker county most of the time from 1858 to 1870, usually re-elected at any time, when he saw a majority in his favor—his term of office never expiring when his party was in a minority!

His jurisdiction was extensive—never governed by imaginary or isothermal lines.

His District was bounded East by the big-woods, South by the Minnesota river, West by Big Stone Lake and North by Sitting Bull's camp.

When the summons was disregarded, a warrant was dispatched, and the fellow always came.

The judge was easily fatigued into granting short adjournments, particularly when both parties and all their witnesses were boarding at his hotel. On one occasion two parties, one man and one woman were arrested for an assault and battery. Two days were spent in trying to prove the case against the man while the testimony clearly

showed the complainant was the guilty party.

The court, nevertheless, imposed a fine of five dollars on the defendant who was perfectly good, while county orders were worth but 30 cents on the dollar and the court was bound to have pay for his time against a responsible party.

Fine, \$5.00; Costs, \$45.00. taxed up on both sides and included in the judgement.

The next morning the woman appeared in court without counsel whereupon F. Belfoy (who had prior to this time settled in the County,) refused to appear for the prosecution and the woman fought the complainant, flaxed him out, and was discharged.

Once only, in our recollection did judge Atkinson find himself at the wrong end of the "judicial nippers."

The circumstance grew out of the Indian War. Jewett was a member of the organization termed by the Adjutant General "Irregular Volunteer Militia" but at Forest City, for brevity, styled the "Guerrilla Guards."

Jewett had not answered roll call for some days owing evidently to indisposition, inclining that way. Whitcomb was captain and our judge first Lieut. a corporals guard was dispatched for Jewett and he was somewhat unceremoniously led by

the collar from his house to company quarters and kept under guard over night.

On the 8th, of October Smith filed his complaint with Judge Griswold, setting forth that Wm. Branham, Geo. W. Waggoner and Cornelius McGraw did on the 7th day of the same month "wilfully and without lawful authority" come unbidden into the dwelling house of deponent and seized deponent by the arms and dragged him therefrom."

On this complaint a warrant was issued by Judge Griswold returnable forthwith at the office of A. C. Smith,, who appeared as prosecutor, and Judson A. Stanton was appointed to execute the warrant.

The "Guerrilla Guards" consisted of about 35 men and boys, while Capt. Pettit was now stationed here with a full company of U. S. soldiers

Apprehending difficulty in making the arrest at Whitcombs quarters. Judge Griswold had made a call on Capt. Pettit of which the following is a copy.

To Capt. G. F. PETTIT:

Co. B. 8th, Regiment, Minn. Vol's.

"Sir:—Circumstances are such as to compel me to issue a warrant against, and to deal with, according to law, one Wm. Branham, Geo. W. Wag-

goner and Cornelius McGraw for a gross breach of the peace, as is alleged.

Circumstances are also such as to render it more than probable that said warrant cannot be duly served without the aid of the military arm of the State.

You are therefore, directed and required to render to the special officer in charge of the execution of said warrant, such military assistance as he may need for the faithful discharge of his duty.

Respectfully, J. W. GRISWOLD.

Justice Peace, M. C. M.

Stanton thought he could arrest the boys without help—by others, it was thought doubtful—the sequel will show that Stanton had made most proficiency in the study of human nature.

He went to Whitcombs quarters and seperately whispered to the culprits, that Smith had a basket of apples at his office and would like to treat his friends and had sent him to invite a few of them, following close behind them, as they passed into the office—Stanton coolly locked the door—drew forth the warrant and in his inimitable suttering style, respectfully informed them that they were his prisoners.

At this moment Judge Griswold sat at the head of the table "looking more law" than any Lord Coke ever dreampt of,—Smith at the foot with the "code" under his arm, and Capt. Pettit with

Lieuts. Hollister and Shaw on either side in full uniform, evidently the most dignified tribunal ever assembled in the county.

When Stanton's "ruse" was understood by the company present, order for a time was difficult to be preserved.

For certain reasons, in connection with the rest of Whitcombs boys, Stanton soon had business at Clearwater, and the court assigned the prisoners to the keeping of "Uncle Ike Delamatter," whose age and venerable looks were sure to protect him from insult.

Whitcomb and Atkinson defended the prisoners bravely, but the judge held them to bail for their appearance at the next term of the District Court to answer to an indictment for false imprisonment. The case has not yet been disposed of, and so far as we know, the prisoners are yet in the legal custody of "Uncle Ike."

Some deny the correctness of this report, and we confess to two strong reasons why it might well be doubted—first the known fact that Judge Atkinson was never before found at the pinching end of the judicial nippers and secondly this was the only occasion known in the history of the county, when Jewett was at all backward, or need-

ed any help, in getting into a muss!

Legal proceedings in the county could be recounted to most any extent and perhaps with some degree of interest, but the printer reminds us that our book is about large enough, and we will be compelled to desist. In many of the cases the ludicrous predominate and while the old saw holds good that—

“A little nonsense now and then,  
Is relished by the best of men.”

We are reminded that it is not quite safe to go in for too much of it. Kandiyohi county was attached to Meeker for judicial purposes from 1857 to 1870 and we have a quantity of judicial and other “nuts to crack” at the expense of that county, but we must desist, as we do not like to deprive Kandiyohi of her own future history.

The first person ever sentenced to the Penitentiary from this county was a man by the name of Roberts in 1869 for twenty-two months—Judge Vanderburgh presiding—Roberts thanked the Judge cordially for the brevity of the time fixed, and hoped he (the judge) would call and see him if he ever came to Stillwater!

## Population of Meeker County.

In 1860.....	928	In 1870.....	6,090
In 1862 at time of outbreak, .....	1,300	In 1875.....	8,520
In 1865.....	1,829	In 1876.....	10,300

## Product of Wheat, Oats, Corn and Potatoes, from 1865 to 1875, inclusive.

YEAR.	WHEAT			OATS.			CORN.			POTATOES.		
	Acr's.	Bush.	Av'ge.	Acr's.	Bush.	Av'ge.	Acr's.	Bush.	Av'ge.	Acr's.	Bush.	Av'ge.
1865...	661	14,835	22.44	338	18,897	47.04	206	8802	43.21	71	20735	292.04
1866...	1177	19176	16.28	455	13809	30.36	156	3463	22.20	122	16317	125.53
1867...	2197	33414	15.20	739	30109	40.74	428	10212	23.86	506	21482	104.29
1868...	4153	74080	17.83	1271	42773	33.65	705	23182	32.88	356	61109	171.65
1869...	5012	74408	14.84	1582	48580	30.71	834	15468	18.52	216	22150	102.30
1870...	11008	148142	13.45	4197	126583	30.61	1187	38849	32.72	233	16593	56.63
1871...	13663	157060	11.49	4053	107104	26.36	2267	49103	20.74	229	25484	201.95
1872...	18493	342320	18.05	5128	171441	33.43	3113	71109	22.89	375	51181	146.47
1873...	23439	363706	15.51	5853	196630	33.59	2129	66934	31.37	321	32134	100.10
1874...	25308	309922	12.24	5301	137454	25.92	2082	59274	28.13	356	33462	93.99
1875...	25130	471788	18.77	5150	225121	35.14	3067	98978	32.34	405	54640	134.91

Previous to the Indian War from 1859 to 1862 wheat had been raised to some extent, probably more in 1862 than in 1865.

## The Year 1875 Found—

	Acres.		Bush. Yield.	
Land sowed to Wheat.....	25,000		471,788	
"    "    Oats.....	6,150		226,121	
"    "    Barley.....	305		6,045	
"    "    Rye.....	32		630	
"    "    Buckwheat.....	271		9,006	
Planted to Corn.....	3067		98,978	
"    Potatoes.....	405		54,640	
Total.....	35,430		861,208	

The area of land in Meeker County is 381,588 ac. Deducting 81,588 acres for timber and meadow lands, and we have 300,000 acres for cultivation.

From the foregoing table we find, in 1875, 32,469 acres in grain crops of all kinds and potatoes, producing 864,208 bushels. At this rate this County has the capacity, when fully settled up, of producing in similar proportions, not less than 8,000,000 bushels, and of supporting 250 run of buhrs!

Our lands are much diversified, affording every facility for farming that the husbandman can desire. The eastern and northern parts are generally timbered with oak, maple, linden, ash etc., the balance of the land is prairie, with groves of timber skirting the largest lakes. The surface is gently undulating, and the soil is deep, rich, black sandy, and loam.

The County is admirably watered by numerous lakes and streams.

#### Wheat Elevators in the County.

Proprietor.	Location	Power.	Capacity.
W. F. Davidson....	Litchfield.....	Steam.....	75,000
Chauncy Butler....	"	Horse.....	30,000
J. M. Howard.....	"	Horse.....	10,000
W. F. Davidson....	Darwin.....	.....	12,000
"	Dassel.....	Steam.....	50,000
"	Swede Grove...	.....	50,000
Total capacity in Bushels.....			227,000

## Saw Mills.

Name of mill.	Where located.	Men employed.	Months run.	Am't lumber cut.	Power &c.
Dassel.....	Dassel.....	6	2	1,200,000	Steam,—circular saws.
Manannah.....	Manannah.....	6	4	400,000	Water,—circular saws.
Forest City....	Forest City.....	.....	.....	200,000	Water,—circular saws.
Carville's.....	East Kingston.....	4	2	100,000	Water,—do'bl's circular.

## Flour Mills in Meeker County—1876.

Name of Mills	Where located	Run of Buhrs	Capacity in Barrels, day	Men employed	Coopers employed	Power.
Litchfield Mills.....	Litchfield.....	7	125	9	7	Steam.
Forest City Mills.....	Forest City.....	7	125	7	5	Water.
Farmer's Mill.....	Swede Grove.....	5	100	5	6	Steam.
Manannah Mill.....	Manannah.....	5	75	4	4	Water.
Kingston Mill.....	Kingston.....	3	60	3	1	Water.
Washington Mill.....	Dassel.....	3	50	3	2	Water.
Greenleaf Mill.....	Greenleaf.....	3	80	5	4	St. & Wa.
Cedar Mills.....	Cedar Mills.....	3	80	3	3	Water.
Jewett's Mills.....	Collinwood.....	2	40	2	1	Water.
Carville's Mills.....	East Kingston.....	2	50	2	1	Water.
Collinwood Mills.....	Collinwood.....	2	40	3	.....	Water.
Total.....	.....	42	825	46	34	.....

## Area of Meeker County.

Town.	Acres land.	Acres water.	Total acres.
Acton.....	19841.86	3129.82	22971.68
Collinwood.....	19284.01	3758.37	23042.38
Cedar Mills.....	23532.83	676.61	24209.44
Cosmos.....	22487.61	542.35	23029.96
Darwin.....	20552.86	2449.40	23002.26
Danielson.....	21975.67	974.03	22949.75
Dassel.....	19692.11	3275.66	22967.66
Ellsworth.....	18494.81	4524.74	23019.55
Forest City.....	21962.50	884.37	22846.87
Forest Prairie.....	22224.31	582.47	22806.78
Greenleaf.....	22777.84	1958.23	24736.07
Harvey.....	24366.84	464.08	24830.92
Kingston.....	33047.40	1395.99	34443.39
Litchfield.....	21511.82	2895.42	24407.24
Manannah.....	25361.92	31.31	25393.23
Swede Grove.....	22155.18	590.86	22746.04
Union Grove.....	22318.99	706.26	23025.25
Grand Total....	381588.45	28781.02	410369.47

The Lakes vary in size from Washington Lake, with an area of 2435.52 acres, to the Lakelet of 40 acres or less.

## A List of County Commissioners, from the Organization of the County.

1856--Thos H Skinner, F N Ripley and J Huy	1867--M J Flynn, H Hall and Ziba Caswell
1857--J T Kinnison, John Wigle and J W Griswold	1868--W H Dart, S Y Gordon and A N Fosen
1858--J Wigle, J T Kinnison and T G Gould	1869--Wm E Graham J B Atkinson A N Fosen
1858-9--A P Whitney, John Wigle, Mark Warren, Peter Ritchie, Ziba Caswell and J V Branham, Sen	1870--J B Atkinson, W E Graham and H Halverson
1859--Peter Ritchie, Mark Warren, John Wigle, Chas Low, Robert Lang and J W Dame	1871--J A C Waller, Evan Evanson, H C Bull, Patrick Flynn and N C Hines
1860--E M Whitney, Mark Warren and Linus Howe	1872--Evan Evanson, N C Hines, Patrick Flynn, H C Bull and Chauncy Butler
1861--J C Whitney, Peter Ritchie and J V Branham Sen	1873--C Butler, N C Hines, Evan Evanson, Patrick Flynn, and Henry Clay
1862--Chas E Catts E B Kingsley E A Chapin, E H Whitney, Jas B Atkinson and Sam Taylor	1875--C Butler, Evan Evanson, H Clay, B F Spaulding, and Jos Hubbard
1863--Geo. S Sholes Sen, H Hall and Moody Caswell	1875--Evan Evanson, H Halverson, H Clay, Jos Hubbard and B F Spaulding
1864--Geo S Sholes Sen H Hall, Michael Johnson and F McCusker	1876--Evan Evanson, H Halverson Jos Hubbard, Louis Rudberg and B F Spaulding.
1865-6--G S Sholes, Sen., H. Hall and Ziba Caswell	

On page 9 of this History, we gave the name of D M Hanson as one of the first County Commissioners—the record does not so show.

Herewith we give the names of the other County Officers, viz :

### AUDITORS.

1858-9 T H Skinner, Reg of Deeds <i>ex-officio</i> .	1865 Charles E Cutts appointed. Resigned.
1860-1a d part of 62 D P Delamatter	1865-6-7-8-9-70 Jesse V Branham, Jnn.
1862-3-4 Jas M Harvey.	1871-2-3-4 John Blackwell.
1864 M W Piper, appointed. Res. igned in 1865.	1875-6 Hamlet Stevens.

### ATTORNEYS.

1858-9-60 Wm Richards.	1869 part of '70 Henry Hill.
1861-2 Mark Warren.	1870 Chas B. Howell,
1863-4-5-6 A C Smith.	1871-2 F Belfoy,
1867 Thos S Brown resigned, Henry Wilson appointed	1873-4 C H Strobeck.
	1875-6 E A Campbell.

### REGISTERS OF DEEDS.

1856 Milton G Moore.	1865 E H Whitney.
1857-8-9 60 T H Skinner.	1866 Jas M Harvey.
1861-2 T C Jewett.	1867-8-9-70 John Blackwell.
1863 T H Skinner till he died.	1871-2-3-4-5-6 N A Viren
1863-4 Hamlet Stevens.	

### CLERKS OF COURT.

1860-1-2-3 J A Stanton.	1867-8-9-70-71 John Blackwell.
1864-5-6 J M Harvey.	1872-3-4-5-6 S W Leavitt

### JUDGES OF PROBATE.

1857 H N Baker.	1869-70 John M Waldron.
1860-1-2-3 A C Smith.	1871-2 C B Howell.
1864 E H Whitney.	1873-4 F V DeCoster.
1865 Jas M Harvey.	1875 John Blackwell, till he died.
1866-7 C B Jordan.	1875-6 S A Plumley.
1868 Henry Wilson.	

### SHERIFFS.

1856 Abijah Bemis.	1864-5-6-7 Geo S Sholes Jr.
1857-8-9 T C Jewett.	1868-9 A A Sanford.
1860-1 E S Pitch.	1870-1-2-3 Wm M Campbell.
1862 John Wigle.	1874-5-6 N J March.
Part of 1862-3-4 J B Atkinson,	

## CHAPTER XIV.

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In conclusion of what we promised on the 4th, of July, 1876, we have but little to add.

As a primal history it has been a much more difficult job than we anticipated and yet we regret not the labor. For the innumerable facts, names and dates, we think our book is reliable and will promise a fund of material for the future historian, far better qualified than ourself, for the task of putting it together in readable shape—we have endeavored to do no injustice to any one—we have had nothing to refer to but our memory and an imperfect diary of events as they passed, and if we have succeeded in doing a good thing for Meeker County we shall feel amply compensated for the time we have spent.

Our printer boys have aspired to have the en-

tire job done up at Litchfield—printing—binding and all, and if they can make anything out of it we shall be pleased to have them.

If the punctuation is not in all cases strictly in accordance with the "Merrill School Book Law" our readers will bear in mind that the boys had a double font of commas, semicolons, dashes capital letters &c., and it was thought best to have the thing punctuated a little too much, rather than not enough—then again we never was a good proof reader, and there are now and then typographical errors, but none so bad but what the reader can readily understand the sense—we know the good people of Meeker County will criticise us lightly for our faults, and feel kindly toward us for our good intentions—and as for outside criticism we care not a fig—they'll waste their ink and paper—if every county will get up as good a one as we have done, what a noble fund will be in store for the future historian!

We conclude this chapter with a brief recital of the celebration at Litchfield, July, 4th 1876—the close of the first century of our national existence.

A canopy was erected on block sixty-eight in Litchfield, covering something over one acre of ground, and it was occupied by something over four thousand people.

## OFFICERS OF THE DAY.

Hon. A. C. Smith, President. Vice Presidents: W. W. Hobb, Acton; Isham Collins, Collinwood; T. Pennoyer, Ellsworth; Geo. S. Sholes, Sen. Forest City; J. K. Polk, Forest Praire; John Sampson, Greenleaf; John Dougherty, Harvey; Caleb Hull, Dassel; Isaac Wheeler, Cedar Mills; N. J. McDonald, Cosmos; M. Henderson, Darwin; Charles Hanson, Danielson; Orin Whitney, Kingston; G. B. Waller, Village of Litchfield; O. H. Ness, town of Litchfield; Charles Maybee, Manannah; Hans. Peterson, Swede Grove; Jos. Hubbard, Union Grove. Chaplain, Rev. J. S. Sherrill; Orator, Hon. Wm. L. Kelley of St. Paul; Reader of the Declaration of Indipendence, Chas. H. Strobeck Esq,

Chief Marshall: Col. J. M. Howard; Assistants: Capt. J. B. Atkinson, Capt. Per Ekstrom.

The procession was formed under the direction of the Chief Marshall, in front of the Lake Ripley House, at 10:30 A. M., marched up Marshall Avenue to 6th, street, thence to Sibley Avenue, thence down Sibley Avenue to Weisel St, thence to Holcomb Avenue, up Holcomb Avenue to the bower.

## ORDER OF PROCESSION.

- 1st.—Litchfield rifles preceded by martial music.
- 2nd.—Fire Company.
- 3d.—Societies Represented.

4th.—Gen. Sherman's Rag Muffins, preceded by the Litchfield Brass Band.

5th.—County Officials; Officers of the Day; Reader Orator and Clergy.

6th.—Citizens generally preceded by Atwater Band.

Opening prayer by the chaplains.

The Star Spangled Banner, preceded by a brief historical sketch of this old patriotic song and of the American flag, by the President of the day\*.

Reading Declaration of Independence by Charles H. Strobeck, Esq.

Hail Columbia, by Litchfield Brass Band.

Oration by Hon. Wm. L. Kelley.

Music by Atwater Band.

Grand Centennial salute, by the Litchfield Rifles.

Auld Lang Syne, full chorus—both bands—  
Martial music and the entire Congregation standing.

Prayer and Benediction.

---

\*The first colors spoken of in connection with the American revolution were significantly enough called "Union flags." No account is given of the devices upon them. They are frequently spoken of in the newspapers of 1774.

The Connecticut troops fixed upon their standard and their drums in 1775 the latin motto in letters

of gold, literally, "God who transplanted hither, will support us." Each regiment was distinguished by its color—blue, orange, &c.

July 18th, 1776, Gen. Israel Putnam unfurled at Cambridge, Massachusetts, on the joyous occasion of the reception in that town of the Declaration of Independence, a standard bearing this motto on one side, "An appeal to Heaven," and on the other "QUI TRANSTATIT SUSTINET." The flag was flung to the breeze amid the roar of cannon and the shouts of the people.

In September, 1776, Col. Moultrie unfurled a large blue flag displayed in South Carolina, and was used at the taking of Fort Johnson, James Island; the crescent in the emblem of sovereignty.

A standard with a white ground, a pine tree in the middle, and the motto "Appeal to Heaven," was adopted in 1775 as the flag of the floating batteries.

On January 2nd, 1776, the day that gave birth to the new American Army, the flag designated as "The great Union Standard" was hoisted. This was the basis of the National flag of the present day.

In 1776, was adopted the standard to be used by the Commander-in-Chief of the American Navy, being a yellow field, with a lively representation of a rattlesnake in the middle, in the attitude of striking. Underneath were the words, "Don't tread on me." This standard furnished the basis of the rattle-snake flag of the rebels, of Jeff. Davis' Confederacy, and has proved a disgrace to its paternity.

The same year the flag of the Batteries was

adopted by the cruisers of the Massachusetts colony.

June 14th, 1777, Congress passed the following resolution:

"RESOLVED, that the flag of the thirteen States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white, that the Union be thirteen stars, white, in a blue field, representing a new Constitution."

This resolution was made public Sept. 3d, 1777. The first flag made in pursuance of it, was first used at the surrender of Burgoyne, October, 7th of that year.

The first change in the National colors was directed in the following enactment of Congress, approved Jan. 13, 1794.

"Be it enacted, &c., That from and after the first day of May, 1795 the flag of the United States shall be fifteen stripes alternate red and white, and the Union be fifteen stars white in a blue field."

This was the flag of the United States during the war of 1812 and '14.

In 1818 it was again altered, and a return was made to thirteen stripes, adding a star for each State admitted, the star to be added on the 4th of July following the admission of the new State—the stripes thus ever representing the original thirteen States and the stars the present number of States. The length of the flag should be in proportion to its width, less the width of one stripe, or equal to the width of twenty-five stripes. The dimensions would therefore be twenty-five by thirteen, the blue or union square at the upper head corner, is, of course equal in width to seven stripes, (a white stripe coming next to it underneath) it should in length equal ten, (or two-fifths of the

flag,) the stars should be arranged in perpendicular rows.

The language of the American flag is as follows: The stars represent the new constellation of States rising in the West. The idea was taken from the constellation *LYRA*, which in the hands of *ORPHEUS* signifies harmony. The blue in the field was taken from the edges of the Covenanters banner in Scotland, significant of the league covenant of the United Colonies against oppression, involving the virtue of vigilance, perseverance and justice. The stars formerly in a circle, symbolizing the perpetuity of the Union, the ring like the circling serpent of the Egyptians, signifying eternity. The thirteen stripes showed, with the stars the number of United Colonies, and denoted the subordination of the States of the Union, as well as equality among themselves.

The whole was the blending of the various flags, previous to the Union flag. The red flag of the armies, and the white of floating batteries. The red color, which, in the Roman day, was the signal of defiance, denotes daring, the blue, fidelity, and the white purity.

The flag planted by General Scott on the National Palace in the city of Mexico, had thirty stars in the Union,

On July 4th, 1876 the National Banner throws 37 stars to the breeze, and is known as the *CONSTELLATION OF LIBERTY*. It is for you young men of the rising generation, and those who come after us to see to it that there are no falling stars from this Constellation.

And now a word as to the song—

## THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER.

If the Freach hymn of Liberty, the Marseillaise, was composed under exciting circumstances the Star Spangled Banner was inspired by events no less patriotic by our distinguished countryman, Mr. Francis S. Key, an able and eloquent lawyer an accomplished gentleman, a man of noble and generous impulses. During the war with the British in 1814, Mr. Key was residing in Baltimore, and hearing of the detention of a dear and intimate friend he started to obtain his release. He went as far as the mouth of the Patapsco river, which enters the Chesapeake Bay, and is about eighty-five miles north of the Potomac river. Here he was arrested and carried on board a British man of war belonging to the British fleet stationed opposite Fort McHenry, the bombardment of which he was compelled to witness. The English admiral boasted before Mr. Key that he would take the Fort in a few hours, and the city of Baltimore within the two succeeding days. The bombardment continued the whole day and the following night, without making an impression either on the strength of the works or the spirit of the garrison.

Our patriotic countryman stood on the deck watching through the smoke which sometimes obscured it, the banner of freedom waving from the fort. At length night came, and he could see it no more. Still he watched until at length dawn began to bring objects around into distinctness. With beating heart he turned toward the Fort, and there waving in the morning breeze, high and uninjured, was the banner, with its stars and stripes, the banner of freedom and independence, then in its early days, It was at this moment of joy and tri-

umph that Francis Scott Key, under the influence of patriotic excitement composed the Star Spangled Banner. After Mr. Key had been liberated, and the British had retired from Fort Mc-Henry, without attempting the attack on the city of Baltimore, he completed his patriotic hymn, which was enthusiastically received then, and has ever since been considered as one of the national songs of our country.

END.

# ERRATUM.

In compiling the names of the County Officers, the Senators, Representatives and Treasurers were inadvertently omitted. We give them here :

## MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE.

*From the Senatorial and Representative District, of which Meeker County Formed a Part:*

SENATORS.	REPRESENTATIVES.
1857-8 R. M. Richardson	1857-8—J. B. Atkinson.
1859-60—C. C. Andrews	1859-60—U. S. Willie.
1861—Sam. Bennett.	1861—V. P. Kennedy.
1862—Sam. Bennett.	1862—V. P. Kennedy.
1863—Chas. A. Warner.	1863—C. F. Davis.
1864—Chas. A. Warner.	1864—Henry Hill.
1865—G. D. George.	1865—Henry Hill.
1866—G. D. George.	1866—Dana E. King.
1867—H. L. Gordon.	1867—Dana E. King.
1868—H. L. Gordon.	1868—J. B. Salisbury.
1869—Dana E. King.	1869—D. Pile.
1870—Dana E. King.	1870—B. Abbott.
1871—W. T. Bonniwell	1871—W. H. Greenleaf.
1872—Charles E. Cutts.	1872—W. H. Greenleaf.
1873—Charles E. Cutts.	1873—W. H. Greenleaf.
1874—Charles E. Cutts.	1874—Andrew Nelson.
1875—Andrew Nelson.	1875—Louis Rudberg.
1876—Andrew Nelson.	1876—N. C. Hines.

## TREASURERS.

1858 J A Stanton	1870 Henry Hill.
1859 Chas E Cutts.	1871 Henry Hill.
1860 W H Greenleaf	1872 H Stevens.
1861 W H Greenleaf.	1873 H Stevens.
1862 Geo C Whitcomb. Resigned.	1874 A N Fosen.
1863 A C Smith appointed.	1875 A N Fosen.
1864-5,6-7,8,9 J V Branham, Sen.	1876 A N Fosen.

# ERRATUM

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# COUNTY MINN.



# MAP OF MEEKER COUNTY MINN.

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1877 by Henry L. Smith in the Office of the Librarian at Washington D. C.

121  
N.

T.  
120  
N.

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117  
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R.32W.

R.31W.

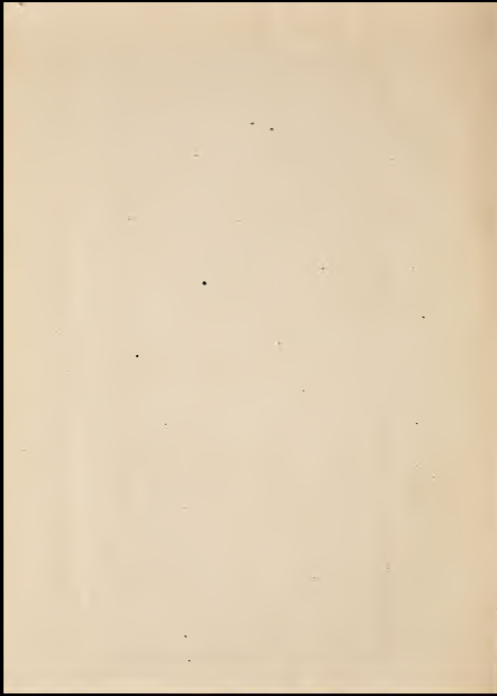
R.30W.

R.29W.

# MAP OF MEKER







12/11/11

